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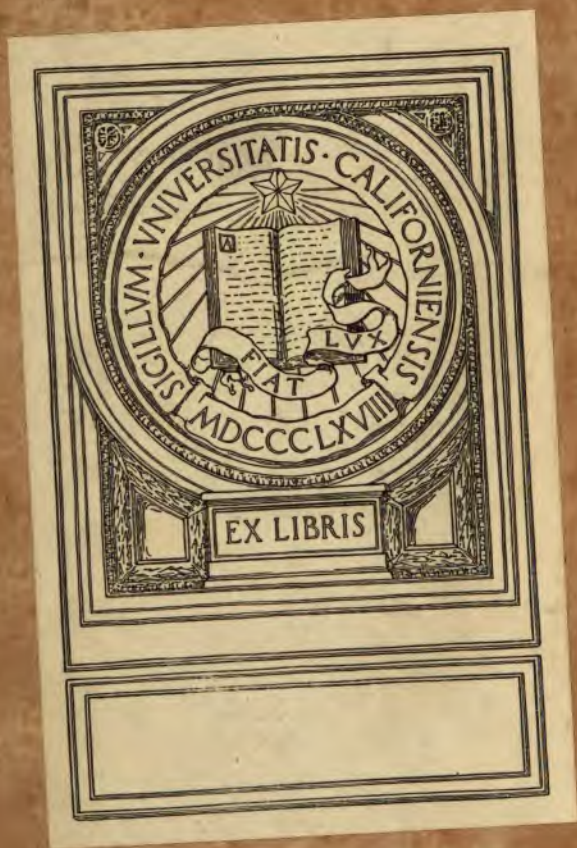
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J. R. Anthony.



THE

IDLE MAN.

By
Richard Henry Stoddard
Author of
California

VOL. I.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

NEW-YORK:

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

1821-2.

Southern District of New-York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit :

The Idle Man.
How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cropper.*

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. THOMPSON,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

TO THE PUBLIC.

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D171
i
v. 1:1-4

As this is a much larger number than any of the foregoing, it is put at a higher price, that I may receive something like a compensation for the labour. For the future, the cost of the several numbers will vary with their size. It is my wish and intention, however, to keep as much as possible within my old limits.

A story will sometimes run out to a greater length than was intended. This is the case with one begun for the Idle Man. I am desirous of making it a part of this work, but am in doubt, on account of its size, whether to publish it separately, or in connexion with the Idle Man. In whatever form it may be put out, its publication will be delayed for a short time.

The present number closes the first volume. From the favour shown me, I have concluded to begin a second. It is a pleasant thing to have our lonely labours helped on by the remembrance that they have met with kind encouragement, and the belief that they will meet with still more ; and I shall return to my work with a cheerfulness, which I knew nothing of when I set out.

959656

THE AUTHOR.

5.

PREFACE.

HAVING perplexed myself for two or three hours, with trying in vain to fix upon a title for my book, I had taken an early cup of tea, by way of restorative, and was sitting in the twilight over a sleepy fire, having made up my mind not to quit my seat till I had called it something.

“What are you thinking upon so intently that you do not turn to look at one?” said a friend of mine as he entered. “I wish,” said I, without raising my head, “that you had taken to-morrow to ask that question; for I was never more at a fault with a conundrum or a chinese puzzle, than I am at this moment to fix upon a title, and there is not a pert Miss of ten but could always leave me behind at either of those plays.”—

“What—that not settled yet?” asked my friend.

“No, I have been under as much concern about what to call the offspring of my brain, as was old Mr. Shandy in fixing upon a name for his child, when he came at last. Pray Heaven there

be no blunder in my case, too, after all. Yet I fear it mainly. I wish the brat had never been born. You see what a little thing it is," said I, taking up a small bundle of manuscript that lay by me; "and you know it is all the same with men and books. If they are not clever and spirited in an inverse ratio to their size, they will meet with little else but abuse in the world; so that it would have been better for them had they never come into it."

"Don't be down hearted man about a trifle. Why there are very good names, and a plenty of them too, ready made to your hand; 'Spectator,' 'Looker-on,' 'Observer,' 'Citizen of the World,' and a score more of very excellent names. What would your nicety have better?" "An arch lad you must take me for," said I, looking him full in the eye, "to think that I would be at the pains of reminding folks of such writers, all the while they were reading me."—"There is something in that. How long is it since you sent yourself to school to learn worldly wisdom? There is another objection, should there be nothing in yours," he added with a grave face, "and which now occurs to me. Posterity might be puzzled how to make a distinction, when

speaking of two works under the same name."

"I wish," answered I, "that, instead of exercising your wit upon me, you would put it to a better use, and help me out of my difficulty."

"Well then, in the first place, what have you thought of?" "I hardly know what. *Speculatist* has occurred to me, amongst others." "Is it in Johnson," asked he.—"No, but there is authority enough for it, and I can tell the world so; and if they will not believe me, I shall have the satisfaction of putting them to the trouble of a hunt. I can go on with my own business while they are proving a negative. It will raise a dispute which will bring me into notice; and let that end as it will, it must turn to my advantage. Yet I do not like *Speculatist*. It is hard to pronounce." "That difficulty will soon be gotten over," said he laughingly; "for you will be so much in the mouths of men, that *Speculatist* will before long be as easy of pronunciation as any other word. But why not take *Speculator*?" "That has been so long used in a peculiar sense, that the old Georgia Claimants, the Western Land Purchasers, and the United States Bank Speculators, besides thousands of turnpike and bridge owners, might be led into a mistake; and having

paid down their money, and finding that my work was a good for nothing thing, having to do with neither land nor water, here nor in the moon, would vow it was a complete take in; and I, who, when a boy, bargained away a large ball of seine twine, just bought to fly my kite with, for a wretched daub in yellow and green, and have gone from that time to this, by the name of 'Moses of the green Spectacles,' should pass henceforth in the world for a notorious sharper. My first number might sell well enough, but I should never dare venture another. No, simple as I am, I will never take upon me a name, which would harm me so, without an equivalent."

"What say you to some quaint title? Quaint titles are always taking with the world at first."
 "To tell you the truth, I am superstitious about the influence of names—as much so as Mr. Shandy himself. And this I have observed, which confirms me in my belief—works passing under quaint names are apt to have more of conceit than wit in them, and an upstart smartness always perking itself in your face, rather than an agreeable humour which fits itself to circumstances, and comes and goes with occasions."

"I see that you will never be suited," said he, snatching up his hat. "So you must leave your mighty work to be ushered into the world by your executors. Or suppose, that instead of a titlepage you make your appearance in a clean, white blank? It would be so new and so clever a conceit, there is no telling but that it would help you more than all the pages following it. I warrant ye, the world will find names enough to call you by, and soon enough too, though they may not be altogether to your liking. And so, Mr. What's-your-name, I take my leave of you."

"A plague go with you," muttered I, as he left the room. "You have wasted my time and patience, and left me to make up for the loss of both as I may. It is no more than my due. He who is always consulting others, instead of acting for himself, deserves no better fortune."

I had, by this time, worked myself into something like a passion, and, like most people in that state, I did in an instant what I had been hesitating about for days; and called myself **THE IDLE MAN**;—a very quiet and unpretending name for a man in a passion.

People who will not see the difficulty and embarrassment of the situation I was in, and

who hold it of little consequence what I call myself, so I do well, may say, that, like every body else who toils and worries about trifles, I have taken the very worst name, if there be any choice in names, which I could have hit upon. I am not of their opinion in the one case or the other. And, to conclude, if they are but half as well satisfied with what I write, as I am with my title, we shall be very well contented all round.

Now, that I have settled my main difficulty so much to my mind, I am at liberty to say a few words about myself, and the nature of my work. If folks will be at the pains of reading this number, it will save me the trouble of speaking about it, and I shall be so far advanced in being understood. If they will not, I may as well be silent altogether.

In the first place, I am not rich enough to write for mere amusement; so that if not paid for what I do, I must stop. Besides, were I ever so rich, there would be no more diversion in writing what one knows the world will never read, than in playing backgammon, right hand against left. My motive to industry being so strong, there is little doubt about the work's

being continued, should it meet with encouragement.

As I have so little of the world's wealth for my thoughts and affections to fasten on, I am apt to set the more by my tastes and opinions—to urge them with warmth, and maintain them with earnestness; and sometimes to speak of those which differ from mine with a little too much heat. I trust I feel no personal hostility in this; and so long as that is not manifested towards me, I hope to bear patiently all remarks—improve by those I may think just—and go on, as I have hitherto done, in my own way, without replying to those I may consider wrong. I am not vain zealot enough to dream of bringing all to one mind; nor should I like to see this so dull a world as it would be, did all men think alike. A little error is better than no life.

I have never written dispraisingly of any man, farther than he was a public creature, nor that beyond his deserts; and hope I never shall. This I make known now, to be in favour with the world. For this is a world all of charity, hating slander, admiring what is great, without envy, and talking only of what is good in men. Yet I have sometimes found entertainment in reading

things in ridicule of another, which I would not have written of my worst enemy; and have borne the prate, the affectation, and folly of the world, with something more than a consolatory reflection at the thought of how much amusement would be lost, were we all alike wise. As something of this fault in my nature may now and then be seen lurking in what I write, I have thought it best to confess it here, and let my frankness go as far as it will in extenuation of my failing.

In such a work as I propose putting out, politics, dry discussions, and scientific articles would neither be expected nor desired. It will consist of stories, essays, now and then criticism, and poetry, when I am furnished with any that will do. I know that it is an arduous undertaking for one whose mind rarely feels the spring of bodily health bearing it up, whose frame is soon worn by mental labour, and who can seldom go to his task with that hopeful sense sustaining him which a vigorous and clear spirit gives to the soul. To know that our hour for toil is come, and that we are weak and unprepared—to feel that depression or lassitude are weighing us down, when we must feign lightness and

mirth—or to mock our secret griefs with show of others not akin, must be the fate of him who labours in such a work. This is not all. When our work is done, and well done, the excitement which employment had given us is gone—the spirits sink down, and there is a dreadful void in the mind. We feel as powerless as infancy till pushed to the exertion of our strength again. Even great success has its terrors. We fear that we shall never do so well again; and know how churlishly the world receives from us that which will not bear comparison with what we have given them before.

Yet these sufferings have their rewards. To bear up against ill health by a sudden and strong effort, to shake off low spirits, and drive away the mist which lies thick and heavy upon the mind, gives a new state of being to the soul cheerful as the light. To sit at home in our easy chair, and send our gay thoughts abroad, as it were on wings, to thousands—to imagine them laughing over the odd fancies and drolleries which had made us vain and happy in secret, multiplies and spreads our sympathies quietly and happily through the world. In this way, too, we can pour out before the world thoughts

which had never been laid open even to a friend; and make it feel our melancholy, and bear our griefs, while we still sit in the secret of our souls. The heart tells its story abroad, yet loses not its delicacy; it lays itself bare, but is still sensitive.

Besides the difficulties which I have already mentioned as lying in the way of such a work as I hope to write, books are multiplying so fast upon us, that they seem, at first sight, to be doing little else than crowding each other out of place. Then, what with exalted and rich romantic poetry, and a new and first rate order of novels, the world is so full of "high feeding," that simple essays, as most of mine must be, will perhaps be tasteless. If I should attempt to make merry with the world, I shall be reminded of *Salmagundi*. And, what can I do in story, with *Rip Van Winkle* and *Sleepy Hollow* in the mind of every body? Yet this perhaps is an idle fear. There is room enough for all sorts of minds; and though one fall short of another, yet, be it good in its kind, those will be pleased with it because of the variety, who may still like another better. Nature never repeats herself; and it is because of her changes that we love her so. We would not have the same form, though ever

so beautiful, always before our eyes. The heart has one delight in the tall tree, and another in the low bush. It is lifted when we see the broad, blue sky and large moving cloud, and is touched with kindness for the field flowers that are looking up about our feet.

Should I meet with encouragement, I propose bringing my work out in numbers as near to the size of this as I conveniently can, and as frequently as the public may be glad to see me.

I am sensible that the whole rests on my own shoulders. For, in these matters, the assistance of our friends is at best but precarious; and there is still less to hope for from the help of strangers. I shall, however, be grateful for assistance from the one or the other; and their wishes shall be regarded should they desire their names kept secret.

I have put up a large porch-way to a small building; but hope it will be found comfortable and cheerful within.



DOMESTIC LIFE.

O friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life.—

Cowper.

It is but for a short part of life that the world is a wonder and delight to us, when its events are so many causes of joy and admiration. The mist of morning soon breaks into little wreaths, and is lost in the air; and the objects which it drest in new beauties, are found to be things of our common notice. It passes off from the earth, and the fairy sea is swallowed up, and the green islands, scattered far and wide over it, are again turned into tall trees and mountain brushwood.

In early life we are for ever giving objects the hue that best pleases us, and shaping and enlarging them as suits our imagination. But the time comes when we must look upon the unsightly without changing it, and when the hardness of

reality makes us feel that there are things not to be moulded to our fancies. Men and their actions were figured to our minds in extremes. Giants and dwarfs peopled the world, and filled it with deeds of heroic virtue and desperate vice. All that we looked forward to kept our spirits alive, and our imagination found food for our desires. At one time, we were vainglorious at our victories over magnificent crimes; at another, bearing up firmly against oppression with the honest and tried.

We come at length into the world, and find men too busy about their own affairs, to make those of another their concern, and too careful of themselves, to go a tilting for another's rights. Even the bad have a mixture in their character which takes away its poetic effect, and we at last settle down in the dull conviction, that we are never to meet with entire and splendid virtue, or unmixed vice. With this sudden check upon our feelings, we may live in the world disappointed and estranged from it; or become like others, cold and wise, putting on timidity for caution, and selfishness for prudence; seeing the wrong, yet afraid to condemn it; guarded in our speech, and slow in conduct. Or, shaking ourselves loose

of this hypocrisy of life, we may let go with it the virtues it mimics, and despising the solemn ostent and formalities of society, may break through its restraints, and set its decencies at defiance. Or, too wise to be vitious, and too knowing to be moved, we may look with complacent unconcern upon the errors of the world; forbearing to shake the faith of the religious, because it has its social uses, or to point out the fallacies of moral codes, because they serve the same end.

The virtuous tendencies of our youth might in this way run to vice, and our early feelings grow cold, were there not in us affections of a quieter nature, resting on objects simple and near at hand, receiving from one being more delight than from a thousand, and kindling a light within us, making one spot a perpetual brightness, and secretly cheering us through life. These affections are our domestic attachments, which are refreshed every morning, and grow daily under a gentle and kindly warmth, making a companionship for what is lonely, leaving it all the distinctness and intenseness of our highest solitary joys. We may bring to our homes all the

hopes and expectations which shot up wild and disorderly in our young imaginations; and leaving them their savour and bright hues, may sort each with its kind, and hedge them round with the close and binding growth of family attachments. It is true, that this reality has a narrower range, and an evener surface, than the ideal. Yet there is a rest, and an assured and virtuous gladness in it, which make an harmonious union of our feelings and fancies.

Home gives a certain serenity to the mind, so that every thing is well marked and sparkling in a clear atmosphere, and the lesser beauties are all brought out to rejoice in the pure glow which floats over and beneath them from the earth and sky. In this state of mind afflictions come to us chastened; the wrongs of the world cross us in our door-path, and we put them aside without anger. Vices are every where about us, not to lure us away, nor make us morose, but to remind us of our frailty, and keep down our pride. We are put into a right relation with the world; neither holding it in proud scorn, like the solitary man, nor are we carried along with shifting and hurried feelings, and vague and careless notions of things, like the world's man. We do not take

novelty for improvement, nor set up vogue for a rule of conduct; neither despair as if all great virtues had departed with the years gone by; though we see new vices, frailties and follies taking growth in the very light which is spreading through the earth.

Connexion with beings of our own household makes us feel our relationship to mankind under the best influences, by cherishing in us kindness towards the good, and pity for the bad, without binding us to the mistakes of the one, or vices of the other. The domestic man has an independence of thought which puts him at ease in society, and a cheerfulness and benevolence of feeling which seems to ray out from him, and to diffuse a pleasurable sense over those near him like a soft, bright day. As domestic life strengthens a man's virtue, so does it help to a sound judgment, a right balancing of things, and gives an integrity and propriety to the whole character. God, in his goodness, has ordained that virtue should make its own enjoyment, and that wherever a vice or frailty is rooted out, something should spring up to be a beauty and delight to the mind. But a man of a character so cast, has pleasures at home, which, though fitted to

his highest nature, are common to him as his daily food. He moves about his house under a continued sense of them, and is happy almost without heeding it.

Women have been called angels in love tales and sonnets, till we have almost learned to think of angels as little better than women. Yet a man who knows a woman thoroughly, and loves her truly—and there are women who may be both so known and loved—will find, after a few years, that his relish for the grosser pleasures has lessened, and that he has grown into a fondness for the intellectual and refined without an effort, and almost unawares. He has been led on to virtue through his pleasures. The delights of the eye, and the gentle play of that passion which is the most inward and romantic in our nature, and which keeps much of its character amidst the concerns of life, have held him in a kind of spiritualized existence. He shares his very being with one who, a creature of this world, and with something of the world's frailties, is

— yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

Wordsworth.

§ With all the sincerity of a companionship of feeling, cares, sorrows, and enjoyments, her presence is as the presence of a purer being, and there is that in her nature which seems to bring him nearer to a better world. She is, as it were, linked to angels, and he feels, in his exalted moments, held by the same tie.

A woman, amidst the ordinary affairs of life, has a greater influence than a man, on those near her. While, for the most part, our feelings are as retired as anchorites, hers are in constant play before us. We hear them in her varying voice. We see them in the beautiful and harmonious undulations of her movements—in the quick-shifting hues of her face—in her eye, glad and bright—then fond and suffused. Her whole frame is alive and active with what is at her heart, and the outward form all speaks. And can a man listen to this—can his eye rest upon all this, day after day, and he not be touched and made better? She seems of a finer mould than we, and cast in a form of beauty which, like all beauty, acts with a moral influence upon our hearts. As she moves about us, we feel a movement within, which rises and spreads gently over us, harmonizing with her own.

The dignity of a woman has its peculiar character. It awes more than that of man. His is more physical, bearing itself up with an energy of courage which we may brave, or a strength which we may struggle against. He is his own avenger, and we may stand the brunt. A woman's has nothing of this force in it. It is of a higher quality, too delicate for mortal touch. We bow before it, as before some superior spirit appearing in beautiful majesty.

There is a propriety, too, in a woman's mind, a kind of instinctive judgment, which leads us along in a right way, and that so gently, and by such a continuous run of little circumstances, that we are hardly conscious we are not going on in our own course. She helps to cure our weaknesses better than man, because she sees them quicker, because we are more ready to show her those which are hid, and because advice comes from her without its air of superiority, and reproof without its harshness.

Men who feel deeply, show little of their deepest feelings to each other. But, besides the close union and common interests and concerns between husband and wife, a woman seems to be a creature peculiarly ordained for a man to

lay open his heart to, and share its joys with, and be a comforter to its griefs. Her voice soothes us like music; she is our light in gloom, and our sun in a cold world. In time of affliction she does not come to us like man, who lays by for the hour his proper nature to give us relief. She ministers to us with a hand so gentle, and speaks in a voice so calm and kind, and her very being is so much in all she does, that she seems at the moment one born only to heal our sorrows, and give rest to our cares. That man must be sadly depraved, and as hard as stone, who does not feel all disturbance within gradually sinking away, and a quietude stealing through his frame, to whom such a being is sent for comfort and support.

Of all the relations in life, that of parents and children is the most holy; and there are no pleasures, or cares, or thoughts, connected with this world, which carry us so soon to another. The helpless infancy of children sets our own death before us, when they will be left to a world to which we would not trust ourselves; and the thought of the character they may take in after life, brings with it the question, what awaits them in another. Though there is a melan-

choly in this, its seriousness has a religious tendency. And the responsibility which a man has laid himself under, begets a resoluteness of character—a sense that this world was not made to idle in—and a feeling of dignity that he is acting for a great end. How heavily does one toil who labours only for himself; and how is he cast down by the thought of what a worthless creature it is all for!

We have heard of the sameness of domestic life. He must have a dull head and little heart who grows weary of it. A man who moralizes feelingly, and has a proneness to see a beauty and fitness in all God's works, may find daily food for his mind even in an infant. In its innocent sleep, when it seems like some blessed thing dropped from the clouds, with tints so delicate, and with its peaceful breathing, we can hardly think of it as of mortal mould, it looks so like a pure spirit made visible for our delight.

X "Heav'n lies about us in our infancy," says Wordsworth. And who of us, that is not too good to be conscious of his own vices, who has not felt rebuked and humbled under the clear and open countenance of a child—who that has not felt his impurities foul upon him in the pre-

sence of a sinless child? These feelings make the best lesson that can be taught a man; and tell him in a way, which all else he has read or heard never could, how paltry is all the show of intellect compared with a pure and good heart. He that will humble himself and go to a child for instruction, will come away a better and a wiser man.

If children can make us wiser, they surely can make us better. I do not know a being more to be envied than a goodnatured man watching the workings of children's minds, or overlooking their play. Their eagerness, curious about every thing, making out by a quick imagination what they see but a part of—their fanciful combinations and magic inventions, creating out of ordinary circumstances, and the common things which surround them, strange events and little ideal worlds, and these all working in mystery to form matured thought, is study enough for the most acute minds, and should teach us not too officiously to regulate what we so little understand. The still musing and deep abstraction in which they sometimes sit, affect us as a playful mockery of older heads. These little philosophers have no foolish system with all its pride

in a way and jargon confusing their brains. Theirs is the natural movement of the soul, intense with new life, and busy after truth, working to some purpose, though without a noise.

✓ When children are lying about seemingly idle and dull, we, who have become case-hardened by time and satiety, forget that they are all sensation—that their outstretched bodies are drinking in from the common sun and air—that every sound is taken note of by the ear—and that every floating shadow and passing form come and touch at the sleepy eye. The little circumstances and material world about them make their best school, and will be their instructors and the formers of their characters for life. And it is delightful to look on and see how busily the whole acts, with its countless parts fitted to each other, and moving in harmony. There are none of us who have stolen softly behind a child when labouring in a sunny corner, digging a lilliputian well, or fencing in a six-inch barn yard, to listen to his soliloquies, and dialogues with some imaginary being, without our hearts being touched. Nor have we observed the flush which crossed his face when finding himself betrayed, without seeing in it the delicacy and propriety of the after man

A man may have many vices upon him, and have walked long in a bad course, yet if he has a love of children, and can take pleasure in their talk and play, there is something still left in him for virtue to act upon—something which can still love simplicity and truth. I have seen one in whom some low vice had become a habit, make himself the plaything of a set of riotous children, with as much delight in his countenance as if nothing but goodness had ever been expressed in it; and have felt as much of kindness and sympathy towards him, as I have of revolting towards another, who has gone through life with all due propriety, with a cold and supercilious bearing towards children which makes them shrinking and still. I have known one like this last attempt, with uncouth condescension, to court an openhearted child, who would draw back with an instinctive dislike. I felt as if there were a curse upon him. Better to be driven out from amongst men, than to be hated of children. /

When my heart has been full of joy and good will at the thought of the blessings of home—at the remembrance that the little which is right within me was learned there—when I have reflected upon the nature of my enjoyments abroad, and

cast them up, and found them so few; and have then turned home again, and have found that its pleasures were my best lessons of virtue, and as countless as good, I have thought that I could talk of it forever. It is not so. Though the feeling of home never wearies, because kind offices, and the thousand little ways in which home attachments are always uttering themselves, keep it fresh and full in its course; yet the feeling itself, and that which feeds it, have a simplicity and unity of character of which little is to be told, though they are always with us.

It may be thought that something should be said of the influence of domestic associations on a child, and on its filial attachments. I would not overcast the serenity I now feel by calling up the days when I was a boy—when the spirits were unbroken, and the heart pure—when the past was unheeded, and the future bright. I would not do this, to be pained with all that has gone amiss in my later days—to remember how poorly I have borne the ills of life, and how thankless has been my spirit for its good.

It is needless to talk of the afflictions of domestic life. Those which Providence sends, come for our good, and their best consolations

are found in the abode into which they enter. Of the troubles which we make to ourselves we have no right to complain. Ill-sorted marriages will hardly bring agreement; and from those of convenience will hardly come love. But when the deep and tranquil enjoyment, the light and playful cheerfulness, the exaltation of feeling, and the clear calm of thought, which belong to those who know each other entirely, and have by nature something of the romance of love in them, are all told, then will I speak of the troubles of home.

MR. KEAN. .

They become sparing and reserved in their commendations—they envy him the satisfaction of an applause, and look on their praises rather as a kindness done to his person, than as a tribute paid to his merit.

The Spectator.

I HAD scarcely thought of the Theatre for several years, when Mr. Kean arrived in this country; and it was as much from curiosity as any other motive, that I went to see, for the first time, the great actor of the age. I was soon lost to all recollection of being in a theatre, or looking upon a grand display of the “mimic art.”

The simplicity, earnestness, and sincerity of his acting made me forgetful of the fiction, and bore me away with the power of reality and truth. If this be acting, said I, as I returned home, I will hereafter study nature at second hand, and the theatre shall henceforward be my school to learn man in and improve myself.

How can I describe one who is nearly as ver-

satire as nature itself, and almost as full of beauties—who grows upon us the more we are acquainted with him—who makes us sensible that the first time we saw him in any part, however much he may have moved us, we had but a vague and poor apprehension of the numberless excellencies of his acting. We cease to consider it as a mere amusement. It is a great intellectual feast, and he who goes to it with a disposition and capacity to relish it, will receive from it more nourishment for his mind, than he can in any other way in four fold the time. All our faculties are opened and enlivened by it—our reflections and recollections are of an elevated kind—and his very voice, which is sounding in our ears long after we have left him, creates an inward harmony which is for our good.

Mr. Kean is in truth to other players whom we have seen, very much what Shakspeare is to other dramatists. One player is called classical; another makes fine points here, and another there. Mr. Kean makes more fine points than all of them together. But, in him, these are only little prominences, showing their bright heads above a beautifully undulated surface. A constant change is going on in him, partaking of

the nature of the varying scenes he is passing through, and the many thoughts and feelings which are shifting every moment within him. In a clear autumnal day we may see here and there a deep white cloud shining with metallic brightness against a blue sky, and now and then a dark pine swinging its top in the wind with the melancholy sound of the sea. But who can note the shifting and untiring play of the leaves of the wood, and their passing hues, when each one seems a living thing full of delight, and vain of its gaudy attire? A sound, too, of universal harmony is in our ears, and a wide spread beauty before our eyes, which we cannot define; yet a joy is in our hearts. Our delight increases in these, day after day, the longer we give ourselves to them, till we become at last, as it were, a part of the existence without us. So it is with natural characters. They grow upon us imperceptibly, till we become fast bound up in them, we scarce know when or how. So it will be with the actor who is deeply filled with nature, and is perpetually throwing off her beautiful *evanescences*. Instead of becoming tired of him, as we do, after a time, of others, he will go on, always

giving something which will be new to the observing mind; and he will keep the feelings alive, because their action will be natural. I have no doubt that, excepting those who go to a play, as children look into a show box, to admire and exclaim at distorted figures, and raw, unharmonious colours, there is no man of a moderately warm temperament, and a tolerable share of insight into human nature, who would not find his interest in Mr. Kean increasing with a study of him. It is very possible that the intense excitement might in some degree lessen, but there would be a quieter delight instead of it stealing upon us as we contemplated his perfections.

The versatility of Mr. Kean's playing is unbounded. He seems not the same being, taking upon him at one time the character of Richard, at another that of Hamlet; but the two characters appear before you as distinct individuals who had never known, nor heard of each other. So completely does he become the character he is to represent, that we have sometimes thought it a reason why he was not universally better liked in this country, in Richard; and that because the player did not make *himself* a little more visible, he must needs bear a share of our disgust and

hate towards the cruel king. And this may the more be the case, as his construction of the character, whether right or wrong, creates in us an unmixed dislike of Richard, till from anguish of mind he becomes an object of pity; from which moment to the close, Mr. Kean is allowed, on all hands, to play the part better than any one has before him.

In his highest wrought passion, when every limb and muscle are alive and quivering, and his gestures are hurried and violent, nothing appears rant or overacted; because he makes us feel, that with all this, there is something still within him vainly struggling for utterance. The very breaking and harshness of his voice in these parts, though upon the whole it were better otherwise, help to this impression upon us, and so make up in a good degree for the defect.

Though he is on the very verge of truth in his passionate parts, he never passes into extravagance. He runs along the dizzy edge of the roaring and beating sea, with feet as sure as we walk our parlours. We feel that he is safe, for some preternatural spirit upholds him as it hurries him onward. When all is upturn and tossing in the whirl of the passions, we see that there is a

power and order over the whole. In the utmost madness, there is a piece of sanity left in the wreck.

A man has feelings sometimes which can only be breathed out—there is no utterance for them in words. I had hardly written this, when the terrible and indistinct, “Ha!” with which Mr. Kean makes Lear hail Cornwall and Regan, as they enter, in the fourth scene of the second act, came to my mind. It seemed at the time to take me up, and sweep me along in its wild swell. No description in the world could give a very clear notion of the sound. It must be formed as well as it may be, from what has just been said of its effect.

Mr. Kean’s playing is frequently giving instances of various, inarticulate sounds—the throttled struggle of rage, and the choking of grief—the broken laugh of extreme suffering, when the mind is ready to deliver itself over to an insane joy—the utterance of over-full love, which cannot, and would not, speak in express words—and that of wildering grief, which blanks all the faculties of man.

No player before has attempted these, except now and then; and should any one have made the trial in the various ways in which Mr. Kean

gives them, no doubt he would have failed. Mr. Kean thrills us with them, as if they were wrung from him in his agony. They have no appearance of study or artifice. The truth is, that the labour of a mind of his genius constitutes its existence and delight. It is not like the toil of ordinary men at their task work. What shows effort in them, comes from him with the freedom and force of nature.

Some object to the frequent use of such sounds; and to others they are quite shocking. But those who permit themselves to consider that there are really violent passions in man's nature, and that they utter themselves a little differently from our ordinary feelings, I believe, understand and feel their language, as they speak to us in Mr. Kean. Probably no actor ever conceived passion with the intenseness and life that he does. It seems to enter into him and possess him, as evil spirits were said to possess men of old. It is curious to observe how some who have sat very contentedly year after year, and called the face-making which they have seen, expression, and the stage stride, dignity, and the noisy declamation, and all therodomontade of acting, energy and passion, complain that Mr.

Kean is apt to be extravagant; when in truth he seems to be little more than a simple personation of the feeling or passion to be expressed at the time.

It has been so common a saying, that Lear is the most difficult of all characters to personate, that we had taken it for granted no man could play it so as to satisfy us. Perhaps it is the hardest to represent. Yet the part which we have supposed the most difficult, the insanity of Lear, is scarcely more so than the choleric old king. Inefficient rage is almost always ridiculous; and an old man, with a broken down body, and a mind falling in pieces from the violence of its uncontrolled passions, is in constant danger of exciting our contempt along with our pity. It is a chance matter which we are moved to. And this it is which makes the opening of Lear so difficult.

We may as well notice here the objection which some make to the abrupt violence with which Mr. Kean begins in Lear. If this is a fault, it is Shakspeare, and not Kean, who is to blame. For we have not the least doubt that Mr. Kean has conceived it according to his author. Perhaps, however, the mistake lies in

this case, where it does in most others—with those who put themselves into the seat of judgment to pass upon greater men.

In most instances, Shakspeare has given us the gradual growth of a passion, with all such little accompaniments as agree with it, and go to make up the whole man. In Lear, his object being to represent the beginning and course of insanity, he has properly enough gone a little back of it, and introduced us to an old man of good feelings, but who had lived without any true principle of conduct, whose ungoverned passions had grown strong with age, and were ready upon any disappointment to make shipwreck of an intellect always weak. To bring this about, he begins with an abruptness rather unusual, and the old king rushes in before us, as it were, with all his passions at their height, tearing him like fiends.

Mr. Kean gives this as soon as a fit occasion offers itself. Had he put more of melancholy and depression, and less of rage into the character, we should have been very much puzzled at his so suddenly going mad. The change must have been slower; and, besides, his insanity must have been of another kind. It must have been

monotonous and complaining, instead of continually varying ; at one time full of grief, at another playful, and then wild as the winds that roared about him, and fiery and sharp as the lightning that shot by him. The truth with which he conceived this, was not finer than his execution of it. Not for an instant, in his utmost violence, did he suffer the imbecility of the old man's anger to touch upon the ludicrous; when nothing but the most just conception and feeling of the character could have saved him from it.

It has been said that Lear was a study for any one who would make himself acquainted with the workings of an insane mind. There is no doubt of it. And it is not less true that Mr. Kean was as perfect an exemplification of it. His eye, when his senses are first forsaking him, giving a questioning look at what he saw, as if all before him was undergoing a strange and bewildering change which confused his brain—the wandering, lost motions of his hands, which seemed feeling for something familiar to them, on which they might take hold, and be assured of a safe reality—the under monotone of his voice, as if he was questioning his own being, and all which surrounded him—the continuous,

but slight oscillating motion of the body—all expressed, with fearful truth, the dreamy state of a mind fast unsettling, and making vain and weak efforts to find its way back to its wonted reason. There was a childish, feeble gladness in the eye, and a half piteous smile about the mouth at times, which one could scarce look upon without shedding tears. As the derangement increased upon him, his eye lost its notice of what surrounded him, wandering over every thing as if he saw it not, and fastening upon the creatures of his crazed brain. The helpless and delighted fondness with which he clings to Edgar as an insane brother, is another instance of the justness of Mr. Kean's conceptions. Nor does he lose the air of insanity even in the fine moralizing parts, and where he inveighs against the corruptions of the world. There is a madness even in his reason.

The violent and immediate changes of the passions in Lear, so hard to manage without offending us, are given by Mr. Kean with a spirit and fitness to nature which we had not imagined possible. These are equally well done both before and after he loses his reason. The most difficult scene in this respect is the last interview

between Lear and his daughters, Goneril and Regan—(and how wonderfully does Mr. Kean carry it through!)—the scene which ends with the horrid shout and cry with which he runs out mad from their presence, as if his very brain was on fire.

The last scene which we are allowed to have of Shakspeare's Lear, for the simply pathetic, was played by Mr. Kean with unmatched power. We sink down helpless under the oppressive grief. It lies like a dead weight upon our bosoms. We are denied even the relief of tears; and are thankful for the startling shudder that seizes us when he kneels to his daughter in the deploring weakness of his crazed grief.

I trust that Mr. Kean will be gratified in his wishes when he returns home, and be allowed to show his unequalled powers in the last scene of Lear, as Shakspeare has written it; and that this mighty work of genius will be no longer profaned by the miserable, mawkish sort of by-play (I have no other name for it) of Edgar's and Cordelia's loves. Nothing can surpass the impertinence of the man who made the change, but the folly of those who sanctioned it.

When I began, I had no other intention than

giving a few general impressions made upon me by Mr. Kean's acting; but, falling accidentally upon his Lear, I have been led into more particulars than I was aware of. It is only to take these as instances of his powers in Lear, and then to think of him as not at all inferior in his other characters, and some slight notion may be formed of what is thought of Mr. Kean by those who understand and like him. For neither this, nor all I could say, would reach his great and various powers.

Mr. Kean is never behind his author; but stands forward the living representative of the character he has drawn. When he plays out of Shakspeare, he fills up where his author is wanting, and when in Shakspeare, he gives not only what is set down, but all that the situation and circumstances attendant upon the being he personates, could possibly call forth. He seems at the time to have possessed himself of Shakspeare's imagination, and to have given it body and form. Read any scene of Shakspeare—for instance, the last of Lear that is played, and see how few words are there set down, and then remember how Kean fills it out with varied and multiplied expressions and circumstances,

and the truth of this remark will be too obvious for any one to deny. There are few men living, I believe, let them have studied Shakspeare ever so attentively, who can say that Mr. Kean has not helped them as much to a true conception of him, as their own labour had done for them before.

It is not easy to say in what character Mr. Kean plays best. He fits himself perfectly to each in turn; and if the effect he produces at one time, is less than at another, it is because of some inferiority in stage effect in the character, Othello is probably the greatest character for stage effect ever written. Mr. Kean, in playing it, has, from first to last, an uninterrupted power over us. When he commands, we are awed—when his face is all sensitive with love, and love thrills in his soft tones, all that our imaginations had pictured to us is realized. His jealousy, his hate, his fixed purposes, are all terrific and deadly. The groans wrung from him in his grief, have all the pathos and anguish of Esau's, when he stood before his old, blind father, and sent up “an exceeding bitter cry.”

Again, in Richard, how does he hurry forward to his object, sweeping away all between him and

it. The world and its affairs are nothing to him till he gains his end. He is all life, and action, and haste—he fills every part of the stage, and seems to do all that is done.

I have already said that his voice is harsh and breaking in his high tones, in his rage, but that this defect is of little consequence in such places. It is not well suited to the more declamatory parts. This, again, is scarce worth considering; for how very little is there of mere declamation in good English plays! But it is the finest in the world for all the passions and feelings which can be uttered in the middle and lower tones. In Lear—

“If you have poison for me I will drink it.”

And again,

“You do me wrong to take me o’ the grave;
Thou art a soul in bliss.”

Why should I cite passages? Can any man open upon the scene in which these are contained, without Mr. Kean’s piteous looks and tones being present to him? And does not the mere remembrance of them, as he reads,

bring tears into his eyes? Yet, once more, in Othello—

“Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction,” &c.

In the passage beginning with—

“O now forever
Farewell the tranquil mind”——

there was “a mysterious confluence of sounds” passing off into infinite distance, and every thought and feeling within him seemed travelling with them. Even in common conversation his voice has a delightful influence upon you, and after hearing him talk for a while, your sensations will be much like those you have from hearing simple music.

In Othello, Mr. Kean is the most graceful being I ever saw. His is not a practised, educated grace, but the “unbought grace” of the soul, uttering itself in its beauty and grandeur in every movement of the outward man. When he says to Iago so touchingly, “Leave me, leave me, Iago,” and turning from him, walks to the back of the stage, raising his hands, and then bringing them down upon his head with clasped

fingers, stands thus with his back to us, there is a grace and an imposing grandeur in his figure which we gaze on with fixed admiration.

Talking of these things in Mr. Kean, is something like reading the "Beauties of Shakspeare." He is as perfect in his subordinate, as in his great parts. But he must be content to share with other men of genius, and think himself fortunate if one in a hundred sees his lesser beauties, and marks the truth, and delicacy, and refinement of his under playing. For instance—when he has no share in the action going on, he is not busy in putting himself into attitudes to draw attention, but stands or sits in a perfectly simple posture, like one with an engaged mind. His countenance, too, is in a state of ordinary repose, with only a slight, general expression of the character of his thoughts; which is all the face shows, when the mind is taken up in silence with its own reflections. It does not assume marked and violent expressions, as in soliloquy. When a man gives utterance to his thoughts, though alone, the charmed rest of the body is at once broken; he speaks in his gestures too, and the countenance is put into a sympathizing action.

I was first struck with this in Mr. Kean's Hamlet; for the deep and quiet interest, so marked in Hamlet's character, made the justness of his playing in this respect the more obvious.

Since then, I have observed him attentively, and have found the same true playing in his other characters.

This perfect conception of situation and its general effect, seems to require almost as much genius as his admirable conceptions of his characters. He deserves great praise for it; for there is so much of the subtilty of nature in it, if I may so speak, that while a very few are able from his help to put themselves into the situation, and admire the justness of his acting in it, the rest, both those who like him upon the whole, as well as those who profess to see little that is good in him, will be very apt to pass it over as altogether uninteresting.

Like most honest men, however, Mr. Kean receives at least a partial reward for his sacrifice of the praise of the many, to what he thinks the truth. For when he passes from the state of natural repose, even into that of gentle motion and ordinary discourse, he is at once filled with a spirit and life which he makes every one feel

who is not armour proof against him. This helps to the sparkling brightness and warmth of his playing; the grand secret of which, like that of colours in a picture, lies in a just contrast. We can all speculate concerning the general rules upon this; but when the man of genius gives us their results, how few are there who can trace them out with a delighted eye, or look with admiration upon the grand whole. Perhaps this very beauty in Mr. Kean has helped to an opinion, which no doubt is sometimes true, that he is too sharp and abrupt. I once heard some very sensible people wonder (where the dark shadow of a mountain fell upon a bright stream in strong outline) why the artist made his water of two colours, as it was all one and the same thing.

Instances of Mr. Kean's keeping of situations were very striking in the opening of the trial scene in the Iron Chest, and in Hamlet, when his father's ghost tells him the story of his death.

The determined composure to which he is bent up in the first, must be present with every one who saw him. And, though from my immediate purpose, shall I pass by the startling and appalling change, when madness seized upon his brain, and rent him in pieces, with the deadly

swiftness and power of a fanged monster? Wonderfully as this last part was played, we cannot well imagine how much the sudden and entire change of the whole man added to the terror of the scene. The temple stood fixed on its foundation—the earthquake shook it, and it fell. Is this one of his violent contrasts?

While Mr. Kean listened, in Hamlet, to the father's story, the whole man, soul and body, was absorbed in deep attention mingled with a tempered awe. His posture was as simple as possible, with a very slight inclination forward. The spirit was the spirit of his father whom he had loved and revered, and who was to that moment ever present in his thoughts. The first superstitious terror at meeting him had passed off. The account of his father's appearance given him by Horatio and the watch, and his having followed him some distance, too, had in a degree familiarized him to the sight, and he stood before us in the intense stillness of one who was to hear, then or never, what was to be told; but without that eager reaching forward which other players give, and which would be right, perhaps, in any character but Hamlet, who always connects with the present the past and

what's to come, and mingles reflection with his immediate feelings, however deep.

As an instance of Mr. Kean's familiar, and, if I may be allowed the term, domestic acting, the first scene in the fourth act of his *Sir Giles with Lovell* may be taken. His manner at meeting Lovell, and through the conversation with him—the easy way in which he turns his chair and leans upon the back of it, were perfectly graceful, yet as true as real life; and Sir Giles was a person actually existing, and at that moment engaged in conversation in Lovell's room.

It is these things, scarcely less than his great parts, which make Mr. Kean the first actor of this, or, perhaps, any age. He must always make a strong impression; but to suppose the world at large capable of a right estimate of his various powers, would be forming a judgment against every day's proofs. The gradual manner in which his genius has been opened to me, has taught me to feel that it is not for such as I to set its bounds.

After all this, I should hardly be forgiven without adding a little fault-finding. Mr. Kean still plays his hands rather too much at times, and moves about the dress over his breast and neck

too frequently, though too much of these, is better than too little, in his hurried and impatient parts. It is as well to mention these trifles. Not that they do or ought to disturb those who can relish his playing; but because when we admire a man, and especially where his genius is of a character to create a kind of personal attachment, we are apt to feel restive that there should be any little, unimportant defects about him to give those, who do not feel towards him as we do, an opportunity to carp.

We wish that Mr. Kean would not depart so frequently from the received readings of Shakespeare. That he does not do it from failure of memory is quite certain; and judging by other things, it is no less certain that it is not from a want of good taste. Whatever may be the cause, we hope he will make a change in this respect.

What we must ask further of him, and what perhaps he will consider a sacrifice to grant us, is to be more sparing of the sudden change from violent voice and gesticulation to a low conversation tone and subdued manner. He uses this very often, and with great effect and propriety, in Sir Giles Overreach; for Sir Giles is playing

his part. So too in Lear, for Lear's passions are gusty and shifting. But, for the most part, it is too marked and striking an excellence to bear frequent repetition, and had better be sometimes spared where it might, considered alone, be properly enough used, for the sake of bringing it in with greater effect in some other place.

Though I have taken up a great deal of room, I must end without saying half of what occurs to me. There are some, I know, who will think that I have said quite enough, and been prodigal of praise. Thinking of Mr. Kean as I do, I could not honestly have said less. It is a low and wicked thing to keep back from merit its due; and I do not know more miserable beings than those who, instead of feeling themselves elevated and made happy by another's excellence, and having a blessed consciousness of belonging to the same race with him, turn envious at his distinction, and feel as if the riches of his intellect made the poverty of theirs.

Oh what a world is this, when what is comely
Envenoms him that bears it!

I owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Kean for the good which the little I have seen of him has done

my mind and heart. Would that what I could say might at all repay him. His genius in his calling has a right to our highest praise; nor does an ardent enthusiasm of what is great argue such an unhappy want of discrimination, as that measured and cold approval, which is bestowed alike upon men of mediocrity, and those of gifted minds.

POETRY.

WRITTEN IN SPRING.

This gentle breath which eddies round my cheek—
This respiration of the waking spring—
How eloquently sweet it seems to speak
Of hope and joy to every living thing!
To every?—No, it speaks not thus to all
Alike of hope; where misery gnaws the heart,
Her gentle breathings on the senses fall
Like hateful thoughts that make the memory start.
The soul grows selfish where enjoyment flies,
And, loathing, curses what it cannot taste;
This glorious sun, and yon blue blessed skies,
And this green earth, but tell him of the past;
The frightful past—that other name for death—
That, when recall'd, like mocking spectres come;
In forms of life, without the living breath,
Like things that speak, yet organless and dumb!
For all that seems in this fair world to live,
To live to man, must catch the quick'ning ray
From man's free soul; and they but freely give
Back unto him the life he gave; for they

Are dead to him who lives not unto them.

But unto him—whose happy soul reposes
In love's sweet dream—how exquisite a gem

Seems every dewdrop on these budding roses!
The humblest plant that sprouts beneath his feet,

The ragged brier, nay e'en the common grass,
Within that soul a kindred image meet,

As if reflected from an answering glass.
And how they seem by sympathy to lend
Their youthful freshness to each rising thought,

As if the mind had just begun to send

Her faculties abroad, uncurb'd, untaught,
From all in nature beautiful and fair

To build her splendid fabrics, while the heart,
Itself deluding, seems by magic rare

To give a substance to each airy part.
Sweet age of first impressions! free and light!

When all the senses, like triumphal ports,
Did let into the soul, by day, by night,

The gorgeous pageants pouring from the courts
Of Nature's vast dominions!—substance then

To the heart's faith; but now that youth's bright dawn
No longer shines, they flit like shadowy men

That walk on ceilings;—for the light is gone!
Yet no—not gone; for unto him that loves,

The heart is youthful and the faith is strong;
And be it love, or be it youth, that moves

The soul to joy, that light will live as long.

And, oh, how blest this kind reacting law!

That the young heart, with Nature's beauties glowing,
Should need, in all it felt, in all it saw,

Another heart to share its overflowing;
While he that feels the pure expansive power

Of joyous love, must pour his feelings forth
On every tree, and herb, and fragrant flower,

And all that grows upon the beauteous earth.

To E****

I heard the Nightingale complain,

While sadder grew the solemn eve:

Oh wherefore poured she here her strain?

At me why seem'd she thus to grieve?

I ne'er the sharpened arrow sent

To wound her rustling wing in air;

I ne'er through rushy dingle went

Her low laid nest to rob or scare.

Now hark! she mounts aloft so high

Her mournful voice grows faint, and faint;

I fear some spirit in the sky

May hear her wild, accusing plaint!

Then wo to him that harm'd the bird!
 Henceforth no prosperous days he'll know;
 Disease shall smite his flock and herd:—
 E'en now I hear them bleat and low!

Freshets shall overthrow his mills,
 And blighting frosts destroy his corn;
 And, oh, the worst of human ills—
 His love shall be repaid with scorn!

No, 'twas not I:—some distant hind
 Has done the rueful wrong; and she
 But hovers o'er my cot to find
 A heart attuned to sympathy.

Thus, Lady, in thy burdened heart
 Corroding lives some wound unseen,
 Thou wouldst not to the youth impart
 Who is the guilty cause, I ween.

Then welcome to thy hermit friend
 Though half disguised the converse mild,
 That to thyself relief may lend,
 But leave him of thy thought beguil'd.

How glad by that same lattice side,
 Where late I heard sad Philomel,
 With thee I'd lean, and hear thee chide,
 Nor ask what you'd not wish to tell.

THE

IDLE MAN.

No. II.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

NEW-YORK :

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

W. Grattan, Printer.

1821.

Southern District of New-York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States. entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" And also, to an Act, entitled, "An Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. THOMPSON,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

THE SON.

———thou art all obedience, love and goodness.

I dare say that which thousand fathers cannot ;

And that's my precious comfort ; never son

Was in the way of more celestial rising ;——

The Old Law.

THERE is no virtue without a characteristic beauty to make it particularly loved of the good, and to make the bad ashamed of their neglect of it. To do what is right argues superior taste as well as morals ; and those whose practice is evil feel an inferiority of intellectual power and enjoyment, even where they take no concern for a principle. Doing well has something more in it than the fulfilling of a duty. It is a cause of a just sense of elevation of character ; it clears and strengthens the spirits ; it gives higher reaches of thought ; it widens our benevolence, and makes the current of our peculiar affections swift and deep. A sacrifice was never yet offered to a prin-

ciple, that was not made up to us by self approval, and the consideration of what our degradation would have been had we done otherwise. Certainly, it is a pleasant and a wise thing then to follow what is right, when we only go along with our affections, and take the easy way of the virtuous propensities of our nature.

The world is sensible of these truths, let it act as it may. It is not because of his integrity alone that it relies on an honest man; but it has more confidence in his judgment and wise conduct in the long run, than in the schemes of those of greater intellect, who go at large without any landmarks of principle. So that virtue seems of a double nature, and to stand oftentimes in the place of what we call talent.

This reasoning, or rather feeling, of the world is all right; for the honest man only falls in with the order of nature, which is grounded in truth, and will endure along with it. And such a hold has a good man upon the world, that even where he has not been called upon to make a sacrifice to a principle, or to take a stand against wrong, but has merely avoided running into vices, and suffered himself to be borne along by the delightful and virtuous affections of private life, and has

found his pleasure in practising the duties of home, he is looked up to with respect, as well as regarded with kindness. We attach certain notions of refinement to his thoughts, and of depth to his sentiment. The impression he makes on us is beautiful and peculiar. Other men in his presence, though we have nothing to object to them, and though they may be very well in their way, affect us as lacking something—we can hardly tell what—a certain sensitive delicacy of character and manner, without which they strike us as more or less vulgar.

No creature in the world has this character so finely marked in him, as a respectful and affectionate son—particularly in his relation to his mother. Every little attention he pays her is not only an expression of filial attachment, and a grateful acknowledgment of past cares, but is an evidence of a tenderness of disposition which moves us the more, because not looked on so much as an essential property in a man's character, as an added grace which is bestowed only upon a few. His regards do not appear like mere habits of duty, nor does his watchfulness of his mother's wishes seem like taught submission to her will. They are the native courtesies of a

feeling mind, showing themselves amidst stern virtues and masculine energies, like gleams of light on points of rocks. They are delightful as evidences of power yielding voluntary homage to the delicacy of the soul. The armed knee is bent, and the heart of the mailed man laid bare.

Feelings that would seem to be at variance with each other, meet together and harmonize in the breast of a son. Every call of the mother which he answers to, and every act of submission which he performs, are not only so many acknowledgments of her authority, but, also, so many instances of kindness and marks of protecting regard. The servant and defender, the child and guardian, are all mingled in him. The world looks on him in this way; and to draw upon a man the confidence, the respect, and the love of the world, it is enough to say of him, he is an excellent Son.

In looking over some papers of a deceased acquaintance I found the following fragment. He had frequently spoken to me of the person whom it concerned, and who had been his schoolfellow. I remember well his one day telling me, that thinking the character of his friend, and some circumstances in his life, were of such a kind that an

interesting, moral little story might be made from them, he had undertaken it; but considering as he was going on, that bringing the private character and feelings of a deceased friend before the world, was something like sacrilege, though done under a fictitious name, he had stopped soon after beginning the tale—that he had laid it away amongst his papers, and had never looked at it again. As the person it concerns has been a long time dead, and no relation survives, I do not feel that there can be any impropriety in my now making it public. I give it as it was written, though evidently not revised by my friend. Though hastily put together, and beginning as abruptly as it ends, and with little of story, and no novelty in the circumstances, yet there is a mournful tenderness in it which, I trust, will interest others in some portion as it did me.

“The sun not set yet, ‘Thomas?’” “Not quite, Sir. It blazes through the trees on the hill yonder as if their branches were all on fire.”

Arthur raised himself heavily forward, and with his hat still over his brow, turned his glazed and

dim eyes towards the setting sun. It was only the night before that he had heard his mother was ill, and could survive but a day or two. He had lived nearly apart from society, and being a lad of a thoughtful, dreamy mind, had made a world to himself. His thoughts and feelings were so much in it, that except in relation to his own home, there were the same vague and strange notions in his brain concerning the state of things surrounding him, as we have of a foreign land.

The main feeling which this self-made world excited in him was love, and like most of his age, he had formed to himself a being suited to his own fancies. This was the romance of life, and though men with minds like his make imagination to stand oftentimes in the place of real existence, and to take to itself as deep feeling and concern, yet in domestic relations, which are so near, and usual, and private, they feel longer and more deeply than those who look upon their homes as only a better part of the world which they belong to. Indeed, in affectionate and good men of a visionary cast, it is in some sort only realizing their hopes and desires, to turn them homeward. Arthur felt that it was so, and he loved his household the more that they gave him an

earnest of one day realizing all his hopes and attachments.

Arthur's mother was peculiarly dear to him, in having a character so much like his own. For though the cares and attachments of life had long ago taken place of a fanciful existence in her, yet her natural turn of mind was strong enough to give to these something of the romance of her disposition. This had led to a more than usual openness and intimacy between Arthur and his mother, and now brought to his remembrance the hours they had sat together by the fire light, when he listened to her mild and melancholy voice, as she spoke of what she had undergone at the loss of her parents and husband. Her gentle rebuke of his faults, her affectionate look of approval when he had done well, her care that he should be a just man, and her motherly anxiety lest the world should go hard with him, all crowded into his mind, and he thought that every worldly attachment was hereafter to be a vain thing.

He had passed the night between violent, tumultuous grief, and numb insensibility. Stepping into the carriage, with a slow, weak motion, like one who was quitting his sick chamber for the first time, he began his journey homeward. As

he lifted his eyes upward, the few stars that were here and there over the sky, seemed to look down in pity, and shed a religious and healing light upon him. But they soon went out, one after another, and as the last faded from his imploring sight, it was as if every thing good and holy had forsaken him. The faint tint in the east soon became a ruddy glow, and the sun, shooting upward, burst over every living thing in full glory. The sight went to Arthur's sick heart, as if it were in mockery of his misery.

Leaning back in his carriage, with his hand over his eyes, he was carried along, hardly sensible it was day. The old servant, Thomas, who was sitting by his side, went on talking in a low monotonous tone; but Arthur only heard something sounding in his ears, scarcely heeding that it was a human voice. He had a sense of wearisomeness from the motion of the carriage, but in all things else the day passed as a melancholy dream.

Almost the first words Arthur spoke were those I have mentioned. As he looked out upon the setting sun, he shuddered through his whole frame, and then became sick and pale. He thought he knew the hill near him; and as they wound round it, some peculiar old trees appeared,

and he was in a few minutes in the midst of the scenery near his home. The river before him reflecting the rich evening sky, looked as if poured out from a molten mine. The birds, gathering in, were shooting across each other, bursting into short, gay notes, or singing their evening songs in the trees. It was a bitter thing to find all so bright and cheerful, and so near his own home too. His horses' hoofs struck upon the old wooden bridge. The sound went to his heart. It was here his mother took her last leave of him, and blessed him.

As he passed through the village there was a feeling of strangeness, that every thing should be just as it was when he left it. There was an undefined thought floating in his mind, that his mother's state should produce a visible change in all that he had been familiar with. But the boys were at their noisy games in the street, the labourers returning, talking together, from their work, and the old men sitting quietly at their doors. He concealed himself as well as he could, and bade Thomas hasten on.

As they drew near the house, the night was shutting in about it, and there was a melancholy gusty sound in the trees. Arthur felt as if ap-

proaching his mother's tomb. He entered the parlour. All was as gloomy and still as a deserted house. Presently he heard a slow, cautious step, over head. It was in his mother's chamber. His sister had seen him from the window. She hurried down, and threw her arms about her brother's neck, without uttering a word. As soon as he could speak, he asked, "is she alive?"—he could not say, my mother. "She is sleeping," answered his sister, "and must not know to night that you are here; she is too weak to bear it now." "I will go look at her then, while she sleeps," said he, drawing his handkerchief from his face. His sister's sympathy had made him shed the first tears which had fallen from him that day, and he was more composed.

He entered the chamber with a deep and still awe upon him; and as he drew near his mother's bed-side, and looked on her pale, placid, and motionless face, he scarcely dared breathe, lest he should disturb the secret communion that the soul was holding with the world into which it was about to enter. The loss that he was about suffering, and his heavy grief, were all forgotten in the feeling of a holy inspiration, and he was, as it were, in the midst of invisible spirits, ascend-

ing and descending. His mother's lips moved slightly as she uttered an indistinct sound. He drew back, and his sister went near to her, and she spoke. It was the same gentle voice which he had known and felt from his childhood. The exaltation of his soul left him—he sunk down—and his misery went over him like a flood.

The next day, as soon as his mother became composed enough to see him, Arthur went into her chamber. She stretched out her feeble hand, and turned towards him, with a look that blessed him. It was the short struggle of a meek spirit. She covered her eyes with her hand, and the tears trickled down between her pale, thin fingers. As soon as she became tranquil, she spoke of the gratitude she felt at being spared to see him before she died.

“My dear mother,” said Arthur—but he could not go on. His voice was choked, his eyes filled with tears, and the agony of his soul was visible in his face. “Do not be so afflicted, Arthur, at the loss of me. We are not to part for ever. Remember, too, how comfortable and happy you have made my days. Heaven, I know, will bless so good a son as you have been to me. You will have that consolation, my son,

which visits but a few—you will be able to look back upon your past conduct to me, not without pain only, but with a holy joy. And think hereafter of the peace of mind you give me, now that I am about to die, in the thought that I am leaving your sister to your love and care. So long as you live, she will find you a father and brother to her." She paused for a moment. "I have always felt that I could meet death with composure; but I did not know," she said, with a tremulous voice, her lips quivering—"I did not know how hard a thing it would be to leave my children, till now that the hour has come."

After a little while, she spoke of his father, and said, she had lived with the belief that he was mindful of her, and with the conviction, which grew stronger as death approached, that she should meet him in another world. She said but little more, as she grew weaker and weaker every hour. Arthur sat by in silence, holding her hand. He saw that she was sensible he was watching her countenance, for every now and then she opened her dull eye and looked towards him, and endeavoured to smile.

The day wore slowly away. The sun went down, and the melancholy and still twilight came

on. Nothing was heard but the ticking of the watch, telling him with a resistless power, that the hour was drawing nigh. He gasped, as if under some invisible, gigantic grasp, which it was not for human strength to struggle against.

It was now quite dark, and by the pale light of the night-lamp in the chimney corner, the furniture in the room threw huge and uncouth figures over the walls. All was unsubstantial and visionary, and the shadowy ministers of death appeared gathering round, waiting the duty of the hour appointed them. Arthur shuddered for a moment with superstitious awe; but the solemn elevation which a good man feels at the sight of the dying, took possession of him, and he became calm again.

The approach of death has so much which is exalting, that our grief is, for the time, forgotten. And could one who had seen Arthur a few hours before, now have looked upon the grave and grand repose of his countenance, he would hardly have known him.

The livid hue of death was fast spreading over his mother's face. He stooped forward to catch the sound of her breathing. It grew quick and faint.—“My mother.”—She opened her eyes, for

the last time, upon him—a faint flush passed over her cheek—there was the serenity of an angel in her look—her hand just pressed his. It was all over.

His spirit had endured to its utmost. It sunk down from its unearthly height; and with his face upon his mother's pillow, he wept like a child. He arose with a violent effort, and stepping into the adjoining chamber, spoke to his aunt. "It is past," said he. "Is my sister asleep?—Well, then, let her have rest; she needs it." He then went to his own chamber and shut himself in.

It is a merciful thing that the intense suffering of sensitive minds makes to itself a relief. Violent grief brings on a torpor, and an indistinctness, and dimness, as from long watching. It is not till the violence of affliction has subsided, and gentle and soothing thoughts can find room to mix with our sorrow, and holy consolations can minister to us, that we are able to know fully our loss, and see clearly what has been torn away from our affections. It was so with Arthur. Unconnected and strange thoughts, with melancholy but half-formed images, were floating in his mind, and now and then a gleam of light would pass

through it, as if he had been in a troubled trance, and all was right again. His worn and tired feelings at last found rest in sleep.

It is an impression which we cannot rid ourselves of if we would, when sitting by the body of a friend, that he has still a consciousness of our presence—that though the common concerns of the world have no more to do with him, he has still a love and care of us. The face which we had so long been familiar with, when it was all life and motion, seems only in a state of rest. We know not how to make it real to ourselves, that the body before us is not a living thing.

Arthur was in such a state of mind, as he sat alone in the room by his mother, the day after her death. It was as if her soul had been in paradise, and was now holding communion with pure spirits there, though it still abode in the body that lay before him. He felt as if sanctified by the presence of one to whom the other world had been laid open—as if under the love and protection of one made holy. The religious reflections that his mother had early taught him, gave him strength; a spiritual composure stole over him, and he found himself prepared to perform the last offices to the dead.

Is it not enough to see our friends die, and part with them for the remainder of our days—to reflect that we shall hear their voices no more, and that they will never look on us again—to see that turning to corruption which was but just now alive, and eloquent, and beautiful with all the sensations of the soul? Are our sorrows so sacred and peculiar as to make the world as vanity to us, and the men of it as strangers, and shall we not be left to our afflictions for a few hours? Must we be brought out at such a time to the concerned, or careless gaze of those we know not, or be made to bear the formal proffers of consolations from acquaintances who will go away and forget it all? Shall we not be suffered a little while, a holy and healing communion with the dead? Must the kindred stillness and gloom of our dwelling be changed for the solemn show of the pall, the talk of the passers-by, and the broad and piercing light of the common sun? Must the ceremonies of the world wait on us even to the open graves of our friends?

When the hour came, Arthur rose with a firm step and fixed eye, though his whole face was tremulous with the struggle within him. He went to his sister, and took her arm within his. The

bell struck. Its heavy, undulating sound rolled forward like a sea. He felt a violent beating through his whole frame, which shook him that he reeled. It was but a momentary weakness. He moved on, passing those who surrounded him, as if they had been shadows. While he followed the slow hearse, there was a vacancy in his eye as it rested on the coffin, which showed him hardly conscious of what was before him. His spirit was with his mother's. As he reached the grave, he shrunk back and turned deadly pale; but sinking his head upon his breast, and drawing his hat over his face, he stood motionless as a statue till the service was over.

He had gone through all that the forms of society required of him. For as painful as the effort was, and as little suited as such forms were to his own thoughts upon the subject, yet he could not do any thing that might appear to the world like a want of reverence and respect for his mother. The scene was ended, and the inward struggle over; and now that he was left to himself, the greatness of his loss came up full and distinctly before him.

It was a dreary and chilly evening when he returned home. When he entered the house from

which his mother had gone for ever, a sense of dreary emptiness oppressed him, as if his very abode had been deserted by every living thing. He walked into his mother's chamber. The naked bedstead, and the chair in which she used to sit, were all that was left in the room. As he threw himself back into the chair, he groaned in the bitterness of his spirit. A feeling of forlornness came over him which was not to be relieved by tears. She, whom he watched over in her dying hour, and whom he had talked to as she lay before him in death, as if she could hear and answer him, had gone from him. Nothing was left for the senses to fasten fondly on, and time had not yet taught him to think of her only as a spirit. But time and holy endeavours brought this consolation; and the little of life that a wasting disease left him, was past by him, when alone, in thoughtful tranquillity; and amongst his friends he appeared with that gentle cheerfulness which, before his mother's death, had been a part of his nature.

A LETTER FROM TOWN.

" Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?"

Henry the IVth.

" If your concern for pleasing others arises from innate benevolence, it never fails of success; if from vanity to excel, its disappointment is no less certain."

The Spectator.

" In a word, good-breeding shows itself most, where, to an ordinary eye, it appears the least."

The Spectator.

I have taken the liberty to publish the following, without saying a word to my friend about the matter. I will, however, start fair with him and others as to any letters which I may hereafter receive. I intend turning all of them into my book which I may consider worthy a place in it.

Essay reading is exceeding easy reading, and, because it is so, people who have not made the trial, fancy it as easy writing. The truth is, that it is more exhausting and wearing to the mind to furnish much of that which commonly goes under

the name of light literature, than to bring together the learning and thoughts of others, however great a show of authorities we may put forward in evidence of our labour.

As I intend giving myself to this work so long as the public will read me, I must husband my time and strength, and not waste them in the odd jobs of letter writing and the like, unless my friends will sometimes "change work" with me, by lending me a helping hand when I lack matter to fill my pages with. I have no doubt that this hint will enlarge the number of my correspondents; and let them amount to as many as they may, I shall not be at all concerned, provided my introducing them to the world may serve, for the most part, instead of answers to their epistles.

I suppose the public would like to have some account of the person and character of this my friend. It would hardly do to give it to them in his lifetime; but should I outlive him, as Heaven grant, they shall not be disappointed.

I SELDOM think of Doctor Johnson, without calling to mind his love of an inn. It is one of

the best natured traits in his character. There certainly is no place in the world where a man feels so independent and easy, and so inclined to take clear comfort.

It is equally well fitted to nearly all sorts of characters. The blackguard goes to it to lord it over his own *squad*, put the host in good humour, have full swing amongst the grooms and waiters, and sharpen his wits upon the comers-in. He visits it nightly, as well for his improvement, as his pleasure; and goes home as satisfied when he has done well in his calling, as those who have finished more serious duties with duller heads. The humorist may have his own way there, and the surly man keep his corner, and pass himself off for one of grave taciturnity: in short, no where else can so many various and opposite dispositions herd together, with so little annoyance to each other.

It is the world "in little." Men of all sizes, complexions, and callings are as close stowed as beasts at a cattle show, and give as good opportunity to observe their points and varieties. Here are to be met with, politicians who never had place or pension, with plans to keep order without law—beaux in rusty hats, and coats white

in the shoulders—gray-headed midshipmen who could “sink a navy”—Laputa philosophers—hen-pecked husbands venting their lungs and spiriting up their courage—quiet, staid bachelors, who eat and drink by weight and measure, and sleep by the clock—the dapper gentleman, whose unsoiled suit has been as long known as the wearer, fresh and smooth as a ladies’ man—and your swaggerer, always dirty and always rude. Besides these and many more in contrast, come the fillers-up of society, men whose differences it is quite a science to trace out—a science, like many other sciences which make more noise in the world, that will hardly pay a man, who has something of his own, for the pains of learning it.

One who wishes to study his fellow men may do it here, and save himself a deal of travel. He has nothing to do but to take his seat snugly in a corner, and look and listen, and now and then throw in a remark in way of suggestion, just to see what it will come to.—Out of all doubt, it is a situation best fitted to that sort of men who keep about in society for the sole purpose of speculating upon human nature. Here they find every one off his guard, and they are not kept back by the restraints of ceremony.

One of these observers will enter a room of motley company, with a grave, downward aspect, and pace it to and fro with a measured step, as if lost in abstraction, and busy about some embarrassing circumstance. If you watch him narrowly, you will presently catch his eye scaling along over the group of talkers you are standing amongst, as if he were taking notes of each one in the circle.

I dined out to-day, and told our old friend, Thomson, I would meet him at the tavern, that he might take me to his club more conveniently. It was a raw, chilly evening, after a warm day—a time, of all others, when a fire is most cheering. Every one drew near it with open hands; then rubbing them together in a kind of self-congratulatory way, and with a working of the shoulders, and a throw of the head and body a little back, was all prepared for a set to at a long talk upon whatever was going.

I was sitting in an old round-a-bout, which stood in one corner, waiting the coming of my friend, and without taking any part in the conversation, when a person like one I have just before mentioned, walked slowly into the room. He was past the middle age, and his tailor was pro-

bably as old as himself, for his dark drab coat was of the fashion of some twenty years back. There was a staidness in his manner, as much out of fashion as the cut of his clothes, which suited well with the strong sagacity of his face. The nose and the lines from it expressed sarcasm, which was tempered, however, by a playful good nature about the mouth. His eyes had that look between suspended thought and inward contemplation, which makes the finest eye in the world. For the most part, there was a rich haze over them; but when they turned their notice outward, they rayed out like the sun bursting through a mist.

His eyes and the expression of his mouth made me observe him more closely, and with a good degree of interest. For it is not often that we meet with men who pass much of their time in society, only because of a certain talent at discriminating and observing, who have not hard, self-pleased, self-satisfied countenances, showing a sort of merrimaking out of the weaknesses of our kind, which no good man can take a share in. Yet they make smooth way through the world. It is ten to one that he they next meet with is glad of a laugh, though at another's cost;

beside that he feels safe and in favor while under the wing of one of these world-wits. They know full well that few men are brave enough to go to war against ridicule, and that as few will put themselves at risk for a general principle.

An habitual, close observation of the customs, manners, and characters of society, will beget in even the best men a relish for the ridiculous. It is past question that a common-sense man, who stands by and sees how much folly is wrapt up safe in ceremony—how much pretence covers indifference, and how far, even amongst the knowing, the conventional passes current for the true—must have a scorn of the foppery with which the plain sincerity of life is so fantastically tricked out.

He, then, who has lived long amongst men as a looker-on, and has kept his exhorting from turning to irony, and his earnestness to indifference, has given a thousand fold better proof of sound principle and a thoroughly good heart, than he who, in a fancied benevolence while apart from the world, sees nothing but the growth of virtue, and exalts himself in raising his species. A little taunting of the world may go with a right love of it; and he may be humble under his own vices

who rebukes another's; else who would be our censors but the unkind, or our teachers but the proud? In a benevolent heart, our very frailties beget an anxiety which quickens and fills out the growth of the affections; and the keen sighted to our faults are not those who love us least, or are most blind to our virtues.

These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind while I was looking upon the shrewd, sarcastic, benevolent face before me. The honest owner of it soon saw that I was observing him; and whether it was that he perceived any like expression of character in mine, or that he was inclined to sift me, I cannot tell—(I rather think there was a sympathy between us)—after traversing the room once or twice more, he made his way into the circle next to me. Taking up the poker and passing it between the bars in the same deliberate manner as the Vicar Primrose did, when about upsetting his daughters' washes—"what companionable, talkative creatures a brisk fire makes folks of a dull day," said he. This was spoken in that low tone, and half soliloquising manner, in which one utters himself who wishes to bring on a conversation with his next neighbour, yet does not feel at liberty to do it, by way of direct ad-

dress, and so throws out a remark for him to take up or not as he pleases.

"Yes," I replied, drawing myself up and turning towards the fire too; "they cluster together with spirits as much astir, as flies on the sunny side of a tree of a frosty morning."

Putting down the poker, and straightening up suddenly, he looked at me with a sociable expression of face, as if we had known each other perfectly well, and drawing a chair into the circle, said, as he sat himself down by me,—“you are from the country, Sir, I presume?”

“I am so. I come to town now and then to see an old friend and give my faculties a jog in the crowd.”

“Two very good reasons,” he remarked. “And may I ask without being impertinent, whether you have two more as good for making the country your home?”

“I prefer the country, inasmuch as a man sees there less of the frivolities of his species, and more of nature, than in town, and stands a better chance to have a more equable temper, and a better turn of mind.”

“True,” he answered. “The flies you just now spoke of will never let a man into their little

vanities, impertinencies, and enmities, however long he may stand feeling his heart fill with gladness and good-will while looking on so much of the enjoyment which God gives to all creatures."

"That is from no want of honesty in them," said I. "They would not lie to us, could we understand their language. They do not keep two characters on hand, the one bad, the other good, like a man with his study coat and another for visiting. I could be well content with the world, bad as it is, would men but show themselves a little more plainly."

"The difficulty in knowing men," he replied, "arises not only from a design in them to deceive us, but also from a proneness to deceive themselves. Now look you round," said he, with a half good-natured, half sarcastic smile, and giving a side glance at the company, "upon any dozen of men you may happen amongst, and it's odds but you will find that ten of them have been all their lives industriously making up for themselves false characters—have thrown away what belonged to them, and might have done good service, to put on that which perhaps was well enough in itself, but has become fantastical and absurd, because it fits ill and is out of place. This lost la-

bour is sometimes from self-ignorance, but as often, to be sure, from want of thorough honesty. The best of us begin with cheating the world more or less, and end, for the most part, our own dupes."

"The world is perpetually struggling against nature," said I. "Who stops to consider, that individual peculiarities of mind and manner are not to be changed, without making an inconsistency of the parts taken together?"

"You are right," he answered. "Every man has by nature certain modes of expression, a manner, and motions of the body proper to himself. No one is, perhaps, free from little awkwardnesses, as they are called, of one kind or another. Now, though these are not well in themselves, yet, considered in their relations, there is a fitness in them, which makes them even agreeable to a discerning man. They are, in general, in harmony with the structure of the body, but, what is better, they are so many honest indications of a man's mind and disposition, which are continually coming from him, and laying his character open to us without his observing them. They are in some sort a part of the very constitution of the being they belong to, and are

so intimately connected with his thoughts and feelings, that he will find it hard to rid himself of them without injuring his mind. He is instantly put into a forced state by so doing—carrying on a double operation, and working under rule for life. For, after all, he can never make it to himself so much a habit, as to forget his fashion of doing a thing, in his concern for what he does. In this way, he is for ever putting teasing checks upon the free play of his ordinary feelings, and breaking up the simple movements of his grand impulses. So he loses his credit with the world even for the little sincerity that he has left to himself, and fails, in the end, of his effect, from his too great anxiety about it.” “My dear Sir,” said he abruptly, and turning suddenly towards me, “did you, for instance, ever see a perfectly graceful speaker, as the ladies would call him, without being heartily tired of him after twice or thrice hearing him?”

“No,” answered I; “your elegant speakers are ✓very much like your Blair writers; there is no fault to find with them, only that we are soon weary of them both.”

“They always affect me in the same way,” said he. “Nor can I call to mind a man who

has made himself felt after being heard many times, who, either from the too frequent repetition of some peculiar gesture proper enough, or from some very odd one, has not set all rules of gesticulation at naught. The most stirring speaker I ever heard, was remarkable for a very singular motion of the hand; yet it was natural to him and always produced an effect, and I never remember it without a kind of delight, and free from any thing of the ludicrous. A man should take care how he new models his manner; for unless he is peculiarly fortunate, the chance is that he will cast off what we could very well put up with, fancying to himself that he is about delighting us with what in truth we shall never tolerate. A bad natural manner is bad enough, but a bad artificial one is abominable."

"There are certain tricks of the body," I replied, "generally proceeding from diseased nerves, which a man had better correct. But the worst of them never make him half so ridiculous, as an awkward man who puts himself to school to the graces. The most remarkable thing about the latter will be a stiff sort of motion, aiming at ease, and a clumsy endeavour after elegance. There are others of a happy temperament and a supple-

ness of body, who undertake to refine upon what nature has done for them, and so part with that which made every one pleased and at home, he knew not why, to take up with obtrusive graces and impertinent grimace, and thus they turn their manners into forms and dresses, instead of leaving them the mere representatives of a polite, well ordered mind."

"Very true," said my new acquaintance; "and if the mind is well improved, and right feelings brought forward, what we call the manners will take care of themselves. Make it a child's main principle to love the truth and always hold to it, and he will have an open and manly decision of manner, which will clear his way for him wherever he goes. Give him a tasteful mind, and there will be beautiful emanations from it, playing about him, even on ordinary occasions. Teach him that selfishness defeats its own purposes, and makes the most polite sometimes vulgar—that in common intercourse a man is to be more mindful of others than of himself—that he is not to press hard his own tastes and opinions, till they give uneasiness—that it is best to find out the bent of another's feelings, and fall in with them where they are not at variance with the

truth—that we are rather to talk upon what our companions are familiar with, than unfeelingly to parade before their ignorance a show of what we know—that, unless some occasion calls for it, we are not to keep ahead of those we are with, instead of walking by their side—that our principal object should be to produce a happy state of things wherever we go, and that in this way we shall make sure our own satisfying enjoyments, and without the mortifying sense of a selfish aim—and you will do more upon these few, simple principles to make a thorough gentleman, than all the pedantry of polite education, than all the outside endeavours of the professors and scholars of elegant accomplishments could ever teach or comprehend.”

This may sound a little climacteric to you, my dear friend ; but coming from a thoughtful man past middle life, who had not lost his feelings with his hairs, it took hold of me from its simple earnestness ; and more so, as I marked the play of his feelings in his face growing stronger and quicker as he went on, and a flush of excitement spreading gradually over his pale countenance.

He paused and looked down for a moment, as if sensible that his zeal had led him into some-

thing like an harangue, and to take more to himself than a well-bred man should ordinarily do, especially when with a stranger. The feeling and delicate embarrassment of his manner moved me a good deal, particularly when I considered that it was shown towards so young a man as I am.

More to relieve him than from any wish to talk (for I had much rather have listened to him) I began saying something about the tiresome sameness of what is called high life in a city. He raised his head a little, and turning towards me with a smile, looked at me as if he thanked me. This put me off again from what I was about remarking, and I was never more thankful in my life, than when I saw my friend Thomson coming in at the door to relieve me from my uneasy sensations. There was something very delightful in them too, notwithstanding; and when my friend introduced me to the stranger as an old and particular acquaintance of his, and I took his extended hand, we were better known to each other, than most of those who have lived next door neighbours for some dozen years.

It was quite time to join the club. My new acquaintance, Mr. Thornton, turning out to be a

member as well as my friend, we walked in socially together.

In my next I hope to give you some account of the club. I make no introduction to my letters, as I intend doing as you desired,—that is, to give you some description of whatever I see here worth your attention, with such of my reflections as may chance to come up at the time.

Yours,

A. B.

THE HYPOCHONDRIAC.

by Washington Allston

He would not taste, but swallow'd, life at once ;
And scarce had reached his prime ere he had bolted,
With all its garnish, mix'd of sweet and sour,
Full fourscore years. For he, in truth, did wot not
What most he crav'd, and so devour'd all ;
Then, with his gasses, follow'd Indigestion,
Making it food for Night-mares and their foals.

Bridgen.

It was the opinion of an ancient philosopher, that we can have no want for which Nature does not provide an appropriate gratification. As it regards our physical wants, this appears to be true. But there are moral cravings which extend beyond the world we live in ; and, were we in a heathen age, would serve us with an unanswerable argument for the immortality of the soul. That these cravings are felt by all there can be no doubt ; yet that all feel them in the same degree, would be as absurd to suppose, as that every man possesses equal sensibility or understanding. Boswell's desires, from his own account, seem to

have been limited to reading Shakspeare in the other world, whether with, or without his commentators, he has left us to guess; and Newton probably pined for the sight of those distant stars whose light has not yet reached us. What originally was the particular craving of my own mind I cannot now recal; but that I had, even in my boyish days, an insatiable desire after something which always eluded me I well remember. As I grew into manhood my desires became less definite; and by the time I had passed through College they seemed to have resolved themselves into a general passion for *doing*.

It is needless to enumerate the different subjects which one after another engaged me—Mathematics, metaphysics, natural and moral philosophy were each begun, and each in turn given up in a passion of love and disgust.

It is the fate of all inordinate passions to meet their extremes; so was it with mine. Could I have pursued any of these studies with moderation, I might have been to this day, perhaps, both learned and happy. But I could be moderate in nothing. Not content with being employed, I must always be *busy*; and business, as every one knows, if long continued, must end in fatigue,

and fatigue in disgust, and disgust in change, if that be practicable—which unfortunately was my case.

The restlessness occasioned by these half-finished studies brought on a severe fit of self-examination. Why is it, I asked myself, that these learned works, which have each furnished their authors with sufficient excitement to effect their completion, should thus weary me before I get midway into them? It is plain enough. As a reader I am merely a recipient, but the composer is an active agent; a vast difference! And now I can account for the singular pleasure which a certain bad poet of my acquaintance always took in inflicting his verses on every one who would listen to him; each perusal being but a sort of mental echo of the original bliss of composition. I will set about writing immediately.

Having time out of mind heard the epithet great coupled with Historians, it was that, I believe, inclined me to write a history. I chose my subject, and began collating, and transcribing, night and day, as if I had not another hour to live; and on I went with the industry of a steam-engine; when it one day occurred to me, that, though I had been labouring for months, I had

not yet had occasion for one original thought.—Pshaw! said I, 'tis only making new clothes out of old ones. I will have nothing more to do with history.

As it is natural for a mind suddenly disgusted with mechanic toil, to seek relief from its opposite, it can easily be imagined that my next resource was Poetry. Every one rhymes now-a-days, and so can I. Shall I write an Epic, or a Tragedy, or a Metrical Romance? Epics are out of fashion; even Homer and Virgil would hardly be read in our time, but that people are unwilling to admit their schooling to have been thrown away. As to Tragedy, I am a modern, and it is a settled thing that no modern *can* write a Tragedy; so I must not attempt that. Then for Metrical Romances—why, they are now manufactured; and, as the Edinburgh Review says, may be “imported” by us “in bales.” I will bind myself to no particular class, but give free play to my imagination. With this resolution I went to bed, as one going to be inspired. The morning came; I ate my breakfast, threw up the window, and placed myself in my elbowchair before it. An hour passed, and nothing occurred to me. But this I ascribed to a fit of laughter

that seized me, at seeing' a duck made drunk by eating rum cherries. I turned my back on the window. Another hour followed, then another, and another: I was still as far from poetry as ever; every object about me seemed bent against my abstraction; the card-racks fascinating me like serpents, and compelling me to read, as if I would get them by heart, Dr. Joblin, Mr. Cumberback, Mr. Milton Bull, &c. &c. I took up my pen, drew a sheet of paper from my writing desk, and fixed my eyes upon that;—'twas all in vain; I saw nothing on it but the watermark, *D. Ames*. I laid down the pen, closed my eyes, and threw my head back in the chair. "Are you waiting to be shaved, Sir?" said a familiar voice. I started up, and overturned my servant. "No, blockhead!"—"I am waiting to be inspired"—but this I added mentally. What is the cause of my difficulty? said I. Something within me seemed to reply, in the words of Lear, "nothing comes of nothing." Then I must seek a subject. I ran over a dozen in a few minutes, chose one after another, and, though twenty thoughts very readily occurred on each, I was fain obliged to reject them all; some for wanting pith, some for belonging to prose, and others for having been

worn out in the service of other poets. In a word, my eyes began to open on the truth, and I felt convinced that *that* only was poetry which a man writes because he cannot help writing; the irrepressible effluence of his secret being on every thing in sympathy with it—a kind of *flowering* of the soul amid the warmth and the light of nature. I am no poet, I exclaimed, and I will not disfigure Mr. Ames with common-place verses.

I know not how I should have borne this second disappointment had not the title of a new Novel, which then came into my head, suggested a trial in that branch of letters. I will write a Novel. Having come to this determination, the next thing was to collect materials. They must be sought after, said I, for my late experiment has satisfied me that I might wait for ever in my elbowchair, and they would never come to me; they must be toiled for—not in books, if I would not deal in second-hand—but in the world, that inexhaustible storehouse of all kinds of originals. I then turned over in my mind the various characters I had met with in life; amongst these a few only seemed fitted for any story, and those rather as accessories; such as a politician who hated popularity; a sentimental grave-digger, and

a metaphysical rope-dancer; but for a hero, the grand nucleus of my fable, I was sorely at a loss. This, however, did not discourage me. I knew he might be found in the world, if I would only take the trouble to look for him. For this purpose I jumped into the first stagecoach that passed my door; it was immaterial whither bound, my object being men, not places. My first day's journey offered nothing better than a sailor who rebuked a member of Congress for swearing. But at the third stage, on the second day, as we were changing horses, I had the good fortune to light on a face which gave promise of all I wanted; it was so remarkable that I could not take my eyes from it; the forehead might have been called handsome but for a pair of enormous eye-bones that seemed to project from it like the quarter galleries of a ship, and beneath these were a couple of small, restless, grey eyes, which, glancing in every direction from under their shaggy brows, sparkled like the intermittent light of fire-flies; in the nose there was nothing remarkable, except that it was crested by a huge wart with a small grove of black hairs; but the mouth made ample amends, being altogether indescribable, for it was so variable in its expression, that I could not tell whether

it had most of the sardonic, the benevolent, or the sanguinary, appearing to exhibit them all in succession with equal vividness. My attention, however, was mainly fixed by the sanguinary; it came across me like an east wind, and I felt a cold sweat damping my linen; and when this was suddenly succeeded by the benevolent, I was sure I had got at the secret of his character—no less than that of a murderer haunted by remorse. Delighted with this discovery, I made up my mind to follow the owner of the face wherever he went till I should learn his history. I accordingly made an end of my journey for the present, upon learning that the stranger was to pass some time in the place where we stopped. For three days I made minute inquiries, but all I could gather was, that he had been a great traveller, though of what country no one could tell me. On the fourth day, finding him on the move, I took passage in the same coach. Now, said I, is my time of harvest. But I was mistaken; for in spite of all the lures which I threw out to draw him into a communicative humour, I could get nothing from him but monosyllables. So far from abating my ardour, this reserve only the more whetted my curiosity. At last we stopt at a pleasant village in New-

Jersey. Here he seemed a little better known ; the inn-keeper inquiring after his health, and the hostler asking, if the balls he had supplied him with fitted the barrels of his pistols. The latter inquiry I thought was accompanied by a significant glance, that indicated a knowledge on the hostler's part of more than met the ear ; I determined therefore to sound him. After a few general remarks, that had nothing to do with any thing, by way of introduction, I began by hinting some random surmises as to the use to which the stranger might have put the pistols he spoke of ; inquired whether he was in the habit of loading them at night, whether he slept with them under his pillow ; if he was in the practice of burning a light while he slept, and if he did not sometimes awake the family by groans, or by walking with agitated steps in his chamber. But it was all in vain, the man protesting that he never knew any thing ill of him. Perhaps, thought I, the hostler having overheard his midnight wanderings, and detected his crime, is paid for keeping the secret. I pumped the landlord, and the landlady, and the barmaid, and the chambermaid, and the waiters, and the cook, and every thing that could speak in the house ; still to no purpose, each ending his

reply with, "Lord, Sir, he's as honest a gentleman, for ought I know, as any in the world;" then would come a question—"but, perhaps, *you* know something of him yourself?" Whether my answer, though given in the negative, was uttered in such a tone as to imply an affirmative, thereby exciting suspicion, I cannot tell, but it is certain that I soon after perceived a visible change towards him in the deportment of the whole household. When he spoke to the waiters, their jaws fell, their fingers spread, their eyes rolled, with every symptom of involuntary action; and once when he asked the landlady to take a glass of wine with him, I saw her, under pretence of looking out of the window, throw it into the street; in short, the very scullion fled at his approach, and a chambermaid dared not enter his room unless under guard of a large mastiff. That these circumstances were not unobserved by him will appear by what follows.

Though I had come no nearer to facts, this general suspicion, added to the remarkable circumstance that no one had ever heard his name (being known only as *the gentleman*) gave every day new life to my hopes. He is the very man, said I; and I began to revel in all the luxury of

detection, when as I was one night undressing for bed, my attention was caught by the following letter on my table.

SIR,

If you are the gentleman you would be thought, you will not refuse satisfaction for the diabolical calumnies you have so unprovokedly circulated against an innocent man.

Your obedient servant,

TIMOLEON BUB.

P. S. I shall expect you at five o'clock to-morrow morning, at the three elms, by the river side.

This invitation, as may be well imagined, decomposed me not a little. Who Mr. Bub was, or in what way I had injured him, puzzled me exceedingly. Perhaps, thought I, he has mistaken me for another person; if so, my appearing on the ground will soon set matters right. With this persuasion I went to bed, somewhat calmer than I should otherwise have been; nay, I was even composed enough to divert myself with the folly of one bearing so vulgar an appellation tak-

ing it into his head to play the *man of honour*, and could not help a waggish feeling of curiosity to see if his name and person were in keeping.

I woke myself in the morning with a loud laugh, for I had dreamt of meeting, in the redoubtable Mr. Bub, a little pot-bellied man, with a round face, a red snub nose, and a pair of gooseberry wall-eyes. My fit of pleasantry was far from passed off when I came in sight of the fatal elms. I saw my antagonist pacing the ground with considerable violence. Ah! said I, he is trying to escape from his unheroic name! and I laughed again at the conceit; but as I drew a little nearer, there appeared a majestic altitude in his figure very unlike what I had seen in my dream, and my laugh began to stiffen into a kind of rigid grin. There now came upon me something very like a misgiving that the affair might turn out to be no joke. I felt an unaccountable wish that this Mr. Bub had never been born; still I advanced: but if an ærolite had fallen at my feet, I could not have been more startled, than when I found in the person of my challenger—the mysterious stranger. The consequences of my curiosity immediately rushed upon me, and I was no longer at a loss in what way I had injured

him. All my merriment seemed to curdle within me; and I felt like a dog that had got his head into a jug, and suddenly finds he cannot extricate it. "Well met, Sir," said the stranger; "now take your ground, and abide the consequences of your infernal insinuations." "Upon my word," replied I—"upon my honor, Sir," and there I stuck, for in truth I knew not what it was I was going to say; when the stranger's second advancing, exclaimed, in a voice which I immediately recognized, "Why, zounds! Rainbow, are *you* the man?"—"Is it you, Harman?"—"What!" continued he, "my old classmate Rainbow turned slanderer? impossible! Indeed, Mr. Bub, there must be some mistake here." "None, Sir," said the stranger; "I have it on the authority of my respectable landlord, that ever since this gentleman's arrival, he has been incessant in his attempts to blacken my character with every person at the inn." "Nay, my friend"—but I put an end to Harman's further defence of me, by taking him aside, and frankly confessing the whole truth. It was with some difficulty I could get through the explanation, being frequently interrupted with bursts of laughter from my auditor; which indeed I now began to think very natural. In a word,

to cut the story short, my friend having repeated the conference verbatim to Mr. Bub, he was good-natured enough to join in the mirth, saying, with one of his best sardonics, he "had always had a misgiving that his unlucky ugly face would one day or other be the death of somebody." Well, we passed the day together, and having cracked a social bottle after dinner, parted, I believe, as heartily friends as we should have been (which is saying a great deal) had he indeed proved the favorite villain in my Novel. But, alas! with the loss of my villain, away went the Novel.

Here again I was at a stand; and in vain did I torture my brains for another pursuit. But why should I seek one? In fortune I have a competence—why not be as independent in mind? There are thousands in the world whose sole object in life is to attain the means of living without toil; and what is any literary pursuit but a series of mental labour, ay, and oftentimes more wearying to the spirits than that of the body—upon the whole, I came to the conclusion, that it was a very foolish thing to do any thing. So I seriously set about trying to do nothing.

Well; what with whistling, hammering down

all the nails in the house that had started, paring my nails, pulling my fire to pieces and rebuilding it, changing my clothes to full dress, though I dined alone, trying to make out the figure of a Cupid on my discoloured ceiling, and thinking of a lady I had not thought of for ten years before, I got along the first week tolerably well. But by the middle of the second week—'twas horrible! the hours seemed to roll over me like millstones. When I awoke in the morning I felt like an Indian devotee, the day coming upon me like the great Temple of Juggernaut; cracking of my bones beginning after breakfast; and if I had any respite, it was seldom for more than half an hour, when a newspaper seemed to stop the wheels;—then away they went, crack, crack, noon and afternoon, 'till I found myself by night reduced to a perfect jelly—good for nothing but to be ladled into bed, with a greater horror than ever at the thought of sunrise.

This will never do, said I; a toad in the heart of a tree lives a more comfortable life than a nothing-doing man; and I began to perceive a very deep meaning in the truism of "something being better than nothing." But is a precise object always necessary to the mind? No: if it be

but occupied, no matter with what. That may easily be done. I have already tried the sciences, and made abortive attempts in literature, but I have never yet tried what is called general reading;—that, thank heaven, is a resource inexhaustible. I will henceforth read only for amusement. My first experiment in this way was on Voyages and Travels, with occasional dippings into Shipwrecks, Murders, and Ghost-stories: it succeeded beyond my hopes; month after month passing away like days, and as for days—I almost fancied that I could see the sun move. How comfortable, thought I, thus to travel over the world in my closet! how delightful to double Cape Horn and cross the African Desert in my rocking-chair; to traverse Caffraria and the Mogul's dominions in the same pleasant vehicle! this is living to some purpose; one day dining on barbacued pigs in Otaheite; the next in danger of perishing amidst the snows of Terra del Fuego; then to have a lion cross my path in the heart of Africa; to run for my life from a wounded rhinoceros, and sit, by mistake on a sleeping boa-constrictor:—this, this, said I, is life! Even the dangers of the sea were but healthful stimulants. If I met with a tornado, it

was only an agreeable variety; water-spouts and ice-islands gave me no manner of alarm: and I have seldom been more composed than when catching a whale. In short, the ease with which I thus circumnavigated the globe, and conversed with all its varieties of inhabitants, expanded my benevolence; I found every place, and every body in it, even to the Hottentots, vastly agreeable. But, alas! I was doomed to discover that this could not last for ever. Though I was still curious, there were no longer curiosities; for the world is limited, and new countries, and new people, like every thing else, wax stale on acquaintance; even ghosts and hurricanes become at last familiar; and books grow old like those who read them.

I was now at what sailors call a dead lift; being too old to build castles for the future, and too dissatisfied with the life I had led to look back on the past. In this state of mind, I bought me a snuffbox; for as I could not honestly recommend my disjointed self to any decent woman, it seemed a kind of duty in me to contract such habits as would effectually prevent my taking in the lady I had once thought of. I set to snuffing away till I made my nose sore, and lost my appetite. I then threw my snuffbox into the fire,

and took to cigars. This change appeared to revive me. For a short time I thought myself in Elysium, and wondered I had never tried them before. Thou fragrant weed! oh, that I were a Dutch poet, I exclaimed, that I might render due honour to thy unspeakable virtues! Ineffable tobacco! Every puff seemed like oil poured upon troubled waters, and I felt an inexpressible calmness stealing over my frame; in truth, it seemed like a benevolent spirit reconciling my soul to my body. But moderation, as I have before said, was never one of my virtues. I walked my room pouring out volumes like a moving glass-house. My apartment was soon filled with smoke; I looked in the glass and hardly knew myself, my eyes peering at me through the curling atmosphere, like those of a poodle: I then retired to the opposite end, and surveyed the furniture; nothing retained its original form or position;—the tables and chairs seemed to loom from the floor, and my grandfather's picture to thrust forward its nose like a French-horn, while that of my grandmother, who was reckoned a beauty in her day, looked, in her hoop, like her husband's wig-block stuck on a tub. Whether this was a signal for the fiends within me to begin their operations I know

not; but from the day I began to be what is called nervous. The uninterrupted health I had hitherto enjoyed now seemed the greatest curse that could have befallen me. I had never had the usual itinerant distempers; it was very unlikely that I should always escape them; and the dread of their coming upon me in my advanced age made me perfectly miserable. I scarcely dared to stir abroad; had sand-bags put to my doors to keep out the measles; forbade my neighbours' children playing in my yard to avoid the whooping-cough; and to prevent infection from the small-pox, I ordered all my male servants' heads to be shaved; made the coachman and footman wear tow wigs, and had them both regularly smoked whenever they returned from the neighbouring town, before they were allowed to enter my presence. Nor were these all my miseries; in fact, they were but a sort of running base to a thousand other strange and frightful fancies; the mere skeleton to a whole body-corporate of horrors. I became dreamy, was haunted by what I had read, frequently finding a Hottentot, or a boa-constrictor, in my bed. Sometimes I fancied myself buried in one of the pyramids of Egypt, breaking my shins against the bones of a sacred

cow. Then I thought myself a kangaroo, unable to move, because somebody had cut off my tail.

In this miserable state I one evening rushed out of my house. I know not how far, or how long, I had been from home, when, hearing a well-known voice, I suddenly stopped: it seemed to belong to a face that I knew; yet how I should know it somewhat puzzled me, being then fully persuaded that I was a Chinese Josh. My friend (as I afterwards learned he was) invited me to go to his club. This, thought I, is one of my worshippers, and they have a right to carry me wherever they please; accordingly I suffered myself to be led.

I soon found myself in an American tavern, and in the midst of a dozen grave gentlemen who were emptying a large bowl of punch: they each saluted me, some calling me by name, others saying they were happy to make my acquaintance; but what appeared quite unaccountable was my not only understanding their language, but knowing it to be English. A kind of reaction now began to take place in my brain. Perhaps, said I, I am not a Josh. I was urged to pledge my

friend in a glass of punch; I did so; my friend's friend, and his friend, and all the rest, in succession, begged to have the same honour; I complied—again—and again, till at last, the punch having fairly turned my head topsyturvy, righted my understanding; and I found myself *myself*.

This happy change gave a pleasant fillip to my spirits. I returned home, found no monster in my bed, and slept quietly till near noon the next day. I arose with a slight head-ach and a great admiration of punch; resolving, if I did not catch the meazles from my late adventure, to make a second visit to the club. No symptoms appearing, I went again, and my reception was such as led to a third, and a fourth, and fifth visit, when I became a regular member. I believe my inducement to this was a certain unintelligible something in three or four of my new associates, which, at once gratified and kept alive my curiosity, in their letting out just enough of themselves while I was with them to excite me when alone to speculate on what was kept back. I wondered I had never met with such characters in books; and the kind of interest they awakened began gradually to widen to others. Henceforth I will live

in the world, said I; 'tis my only remedy: a man's own affairs are soon conned; he gets them by heart till they haunt him when he would be rid of them; but those of another can be known only in part, while that which remains unrevealed is a never-ending stimulus to curiosity. The only natural mode therefore of preventing the mind preying on itself—the only rational, because the only interminable employment is to be busy about other people's business.

The variety of objects which this new course of life each day presented, brought me at length to a state of sanity; at least, I was no longer disposed to conjure up remote dangers to my door, or chew the cud on my indigested past reading; though sometimes, I confess, when I have been tempted to meddle with a very bad character, I have invariably been threatened with a relapse; which leads me to think the existence of some secret affinity between rogues and boa-constrictors is not unlikely. In a short time, however, I had every reason to believe myself completely cured; for the days began to appear of their natural length, and I no longer saw every thing through a pair of blue spectacles, but found nature diversified by a thousand beautiful colours, and the

people about me a thousand times more interesting than hyænas or hottentots. The world is now my only study, and I trust I shall stick to it for the sake of my health.

POETRY.

GREEN RIVER.

When breezes are soft, and skies are fair,
I steal an hour from study and care,
And hie me away to the woodland scene,
Where wanders the stream with waters of green,
As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink
Had given their stain to the wave they drink.
And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.

Yet pure its waters, its shallows are bright
With coloured pebbles, and sparkles of light,
And clear the depths where the eddies play,
And dimples deepen and whirl away;
And the plane-tree's speckled arms o'ershoot
The swifter current that mines its root;
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk the hill,
The quivering glimmer of sun and rill
With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,
Like the ray that streams from the diamond stone.
Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,
With blossoms, and birds, and wild bees' hum;

The flowers of summer are fairest there,
 And freshest the breath of the summer air,
 And the swimmer comes, in the season of heat
 To bathe in those waters so pure and sweet.

Yet, fair as thou art, thou shunn'st to glide,
 Beautiful stream! by the village side,
 But windest away from haunts of men,
 To silent valley, and shaded glen.
 And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,
 Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still.
 Lonely—save when, by thy rippling tides,
 From thicket to thicket the angler glides;
 Or the simpler comes, with basket and book,
 For herbs of power on thy banks to look;
 Or haply some idle dreamer like me,
 To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee.
 Still—save the chirp of birds that feed
 On the river cherry and seedy reed;
 And thy own wild music, gushing out
 With mellow murmur, or fairy shout,
 From dawn to the blush of another day,
 Like traveller singing along his way.

That fairy music I never hear,
 Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear;
 And mark them winding away from sight,
 Darkened with shade, or flashing with light,
 While o'er thee, the vine to its thicket clings,
 And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings;—

But I wish that fate had left me free
To wander these quiet haunts with thee,
Till the eating cares of earth should depart,
And the peace of the scene pass into my heart;
And I envy thy stream as it glides along
Through its beautiful banks, in a trance of song.
Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen,
And mingle among the jostling crowd,
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud;
I sometimes come to this quiet place,
To breathe the air that ruffles thy face,
And gaze upon thee in silent dream;
For, in thy lonely and lovely stream,
An image of that calm life appears
That won my heart in my greener years.

THE

IDLE MAN.

No. III.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cramer.*

NEW-YORK:
WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

1821.

Southern District of New York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, **WILEY & HALSTED**, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle.

Cowper.

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G. L. THOMPSON,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

EDWARD AND MARY.

"Oh, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day :
Which now shews all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away:"

—"why, man, she is mine own ;
And I as rich, in having such a jewel,
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold."

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

To love deeply and to believe our love returned and yet to be sensible that we should not make our love known, is one of the hardest trials a man can undergo. It asks more of us because the passion is the most secret in our natures. All sympathy is distasteful except that of one being, and that, in such a case, we must deny ourselves. In our sorrow at the loss of friends, if we shun direct and proffered consolations, we love the assuagings which another's pity administers to us in the gentle tones, mild manners, kind looks, and nameless little notices which happen in the

numberless affairs of daily life. But the man that loves and is unhappy, starts at a soothing voice as if he were betrayed; eyes turned in affectionate regard upon him enter his heart like a sword; his way is not in the path of other men, and his misery must be borne unseen and alone.

This severance from the world, this desertion of all intercourse with man, gives a bitterness to grief greater than any evil life takes of, and yet here we drink it of ourselves; we make our own solitude, root up the flowers in it, and watch them as they wither; we lay it bare of all beauty and make it empty of life, and then feel as if others had spoiled us and left us to perish. Relief from troubles may be found in society and employments; but unprosperous love goes every where with a man; his thoughts are forever upon it; it is in him and around him like the air; it breaks his night-rest, and causes him to hide his head from the morning light. The music of the open sky sings a dirge over his joys, and the strong trees of the forest droop over the grave of all he held dear.

Thwarted love is more romantic than even that which is blessed; the imagination grows forgetive, and the mind idles in its melancholy

amongst fantastic shapes ; all it hears or sees is turned to its own uses, taking new forms and new relations every moment, and multiplying without end. It wanders off amongst its own creations ; they crowd thicker round it the farther it goes, till at last it loses sight of the world, and becomes bewildered in the many and uneven paths it had trodden out for itself.

EDWARD SHIRLEY was of a grave, thoughtful cast of character, much absorbed in his own feelings, yet with a strong affection for the few whom his reserve and what some would call his prejudices allowed him to take as intimates. He had read so much of wrong, and had learned to think that there was so little of true delicacy and deep and enduring love amongst men to answer to what he felt within himself, that he was sensible of something like a distaste of the world at large. This was a cause not of triumph, but of melancholy to him, and an expression of mild delight was visible in his countenance whenever he saw at his father's a stranger of an open and benevolent aspect. His feelings were apt to fasten upon things which could not break upon the train of his silent thoughts, and they grew more and more into an attachment to inanimate

objects and brutes. He was forever in the fields; the beauties of nature made his chief delight; he was open to their purifying influences, and the innocence which God seemed to have stamped upon all of them, was almost religion to him.

But we are made for other purposes than to have our interests begin and end in these; and he who has let his affections grow where the brooks run and the buds are opening to the warm sun, will find at last that the love of some human being will twine the closer because of it about his heart, and other joys and sorrows than those he had fostered under the blue sky, enter the deeper into his soul.

It has been said that no man of genius or sentiment ever lived to twenty years, without being in love. It is in some sense true; for if he does not find a living idol, he will make one to himself, and be a constant and fervent worshipper of that. When Edward was asked how it happened that such a romantic youth as he had never been in love, he answered, "I have been so, and for a long time, but my mistress is here, in the brain, and it is the only one I shall ever make knee to; for," he added, "the only woman that I could love must come so nigh in all high qualities to

her who lives in my imagination, that did she really live, she would look down upon such a worthless thing as I am. So, as for women, I think not of them." This he said with a smile, but his heart was heavy, for as he grew into life he felt an inanity, and his affections craved strongly something more. As he patted the head of his brother's boy, he said to himself, "am I never to be a father, and shall I die and leave no child to bless me? Shall I go out of the world, and shall no one of all the living feel a peculiar grief for me?"

The time was near at hand when Edward was to learn that real love was a more serious thing than that of the imagination. Mrs. Aston had lately taken possession of a small house near his father's. Just income enough to support her and her daughter Mary, in a simple and comfortable manner, was all Mr. Aston left. He was the son of a gentleman of good estate, but with a great number of children. He married young, and with no definite views of the means of supporting a family. He had been used to elegance and plenty at home, and, like most young men, never once considered how small a share a division of his father's property would leave to him. So long

as his father lived, he got along tolerably well; but not many years after old Mr. Aston's death, the son found his estate fast diminishing, while he had a wife and children to support. Being little acquainted with the world, his plans were badly laid and worse managed; poverty was eating in upon him, not rapidly, but as surely and fatally as the sea sometimes gains upon the shore, and his spirits began forsaking him almost as fast as his acquaintances and friends. Though he had never rested his happiness upon society at large, nor estimated himself by its opinions, yet remembered courtesies taken with present neglect, went to his heart when he thought of his wife and children, and looked forward to what awaited them. He grew languid in body, and brooded over immediate and dreaded evils, till a dull, changeless gloom gathered over his mind, and his faculties seemed falling into a kind of uneasy sleep. He was roused from this for a short time by the last feeble and irregular efforts of worn out nature. As he sat in the easy chair by his bed a few days before his death, there was a tranquillity in his voice and manner, and a benign composure in his countenance, as if the inspiring light of the world to which he was going, had already entered

into his soul. As his wife gave him his cordial, —“heaven seems to have ordained it in mercy to those we love,” he said, looking up in her face, “that we should need their care so much, and ask of them so many attentions in our last hours. It breaks the thought that would otherwise fasten wholly on the loss they must soon bear, and their affliction is a little soothed so long as they administer good and ease to those of us who are about to die. And I feel,” he added, “how much, as the last and true tokens of love, they take from the bitterness of the separation which death makes sooner or later between us all.”

“Why do you talk thus, Alfred?” said his wife. “You have been much stronger for two days past. Hopes of better years than those gone, will be medicine to you. And why should you not hope? A change may come for you as well as others; and those who knew your father may do a kind office to his son, be it but in honour of his memory.”

“There is but one change for me, my love,” replied he gravely, “and as to the dead,” he added with a forced smile, “their good deeds go out of the memory of this world as surely as they enter into another. The concerns of the

world are ever shifting—its interests and relations ; and he who was in regard yesterday, will not be thought of tomorrow. But though there is too much of forgetfulness and selfishness amongst men, I would not blame them now, nor question the providence of God, which out of this evil brings good by making men active and considerate of ends. Let me rather take blame to myself ; for though it may be from a defect of nature in me, and not from any want of disposition or endeavour, that my condition in life has been a hard one, yet I might have known my weakness, and have avoided a responsibility I could not answer. To love you as I have done from the time I first saw you to this my last hour, was surely no crime ; my error was in shutting my eyes upon what it was leading us to. The suffering I have undergone, I hope, will be some atonement for my fault.”

“My children,” said he, turning towards his son and daughter, “beware that the ingenuity of men does not lead you to act against what you feel to be a virtuous impulse, for there is almost as much error of the head as of the heart in man. At the same time, do not trust wholly to what seem innocent impulses, especially when they

fall in with your desires, for what is in itself innocent may become evil from the relation it may hold to others; so that it is not enough to consider it abstractly, but to cast about and ask yourselves what may be its effect in new connexions now and in future. Guide in this way your virtues by your wisdom, and you will have much of deep enjoyment now, and little to repent of hereafter."

Though this was a scene of severe grief, (for Mr. Aston was loved by his wife and children with an ardour and sincerity which few deserve or enjoy,) yet the composure of his manner tranquillized them, and their tears fell in silence.

"I have talked too much, and must lie down." They helped him to his bed. He soon fell into a gentle sleep, with his wife's hand in his, and never waked again.

As soon as the painful concerns following Mr. Aston's death were finished, his widow moved to the house I have mentioned, and which belonged to a penurious brother, who thought the world would look hard upon him, were she left without a shelter. He took her son into his counting-house; for being a lad of quick parts, he would more than repay the obligation by his services,

besides giving his uncle an opportunity of appearing to do a deed of charity.

The house they moved to was not without its recollections to Mary's mother. She had been often in it when a child, and had frequently met Mr. Aston there when he was a cheerful young man. Entering a dwelling in which we had lived many years ago, brings together the past and present with a distinctness nothing else can. It is always with some tinge of melancholy, even to those who have prospered in the world; for let it have gone with us as well as it may, more of disappointments and troubles, than of pleasures, occur to us at such a time; and those pleasures which are remembered as having happened in the place we stand in, are thought of, not as so many which we had enjoyed, but as so many lost to us forever. The trial was a hard one indeed to Mrs. Aston. When left alone, and when the events and feelings of many years came altogether to her mind, in the agony of nature she uttered a loud and sorrowful cry. She had lived to see all her full hopes blasted; the misery of anxiety had mingled with her love, and the man who had made, as it were, her existence, and who might, she thought, have

led a happy life had he never known her, had died of a broken heart.—“I could have borne your death, Alfred, had some common sickness taken you from me. I could have lived for our children, and the memory of you would have been an angel of comfort to me. But to know that a wasting sorrow of the mind made life comfortless to you who had a heart for its best joys, and cut you so soon off;—how can I bear it! O, look down upon me, and teach me how!

Mary's affectionate manners and constant kind attentions, at last touched her mother's heart, roused her from her abstracted grief, and made her once more sensible that there was a living being for her to love, and for whom she had many duties to fulfil.

“Have you seen your new neighbours?” said Harriet Shirley to her brother.

“They were at Church last Sunday, but so veiled that I could not see their faces. To tell you the truth, I should hardly dare see the daughter's. Her form is the finest I ever beheld; and I am sure there was never so much beauty of movement without a mind answering to it.”

"There's a scrap of your theory again. Upon my word, Edward, you will go mad in love theoretically."

"I am half afraid of it myself, for in my walks I have seen her more than once floating before me in the sunbeams."

"A shame on you! You a lover? Why didn't you say, in the moonlight, with her cheek on her lily hand, looking as sad as Liberty at the tomb of Washington? Now don't give me that look of grave reproof. If I do trifle out of season, it is not that I do not feel."

"Heedlessness often causes as much pain as bad intention, Harriet; and think of it as you may, will more or less harden the heart of those who are guilty of it. I know you are a good girl, for all your rattle, and much better than you seem. But there is no need, child, of playing the 'hypocrite reversed,' when there are hardly examples enough of goodness to keep virtue in countenance."

"You are right, Edward, you are always right; and I will try to follow your advice; but you must first follow mine. I am a generous hearted girl, and will give it you without asking. By a mere glimpse of this Miss Aston, she has

gotten into your imagination ; and unless in good time you see something more of what you would call the humdrum reality, you will be so far gone in love shortly, that when you do at last meet with her, you will be lost, to a certainty. So, before it is too late, come along with me, and rid yourself of this fairy vision."

They turned up the narrow grassy lane which led to Mrs. Aston's house. It was bounded by an old irregular stone-wall, over which ran a few straggling wild vines, while the setting sun was pouring its rich light upon the yellow, green, and stone-coloured moss which coated over the wall. The branches of the cedars, under which they were walking, lifted and fell with a fanning motion to the night breeze, and here and there a bird was singing her farewell to the sun, as she swung upon them. Following a turn in the lane brought them immediately before the house. It was an old structure, projecting in front over the basement story, and running up from the coving into three sharp triangles, looking as bold and fantastic as the general officers in the prints of the Duke of Marlborough's battles. Edward felt as much reverence for the edifice, as he would have done for one of those

venerable old gentlemen of Queen Anne's time, had he made his appearance.

Mary Aston did not see them, as she was intent upon training up a honey-suckle to one of the carved urns pendent from the projection of the house. Edward stopped to watch for a moment her delicate white fingers, as they moved amongst the leaves and flowers. Her mother was sitting in the porch, with her eyes fixed upon the shaggy house-dog, which was once her husband's. The dog was lying upon the step with his neck stretched out over the door-sill, and resting partly on his mistress' feet. He was the first to notice the visitors. He turned round his head, got up and shook himself very deliberately, and then looked up in his mistress' face, as if asking how he was to receive the new comers.

"Mary," said her mother, rising.—Mary looked round, and then came forward a little. Harriet introduced herself and brother with her wonted easy cheerfulness, tempered by the situation of the strangers. She apologized for having put off her call so long, by saying it was from the hope that her mother would before then have been well enough to have accompanied her.

"I heard that your mother was not well ; and do not know but that I should have waved ceremony, and called in to see her when walking out with Mary some evening. For I remember having met her in this very house ; and I believe we liked each other well at the time. And there are so few early connexions left to us late in life, that I should not willingly give up those I could retain." This was a general reflection, but brought with it the remembrance of her husband ; and the struggle to overcome her feelings showed itself in her countenance.

"Will you walk into the house," said Mary to Harriet and her brother, "or should you like better a seat here in the open air this bright evening?" "For my part," said Edward, taking hold of the broken string which the honey-suckle had wound round, "as I have interrupted you in your work, I will now help you finish it, if you will permit me." There was a delicate respect in Edward's manner, which gave an air of kindness and attention to what in others would have looked like mere officiousness. Besides, he had a tact for character, which kept him from any show of sudden intimacy, where it would not be understood and frankly received. It is said

that sagacious dogs possess the same quality. It was certainly so with Argus; for what with his fawning, and the fair hands of Mary kindly saving the plant from harm, Edward scarce knew what he was about. He began with tying the bow of the knot first—it slipt, and the vine fell upon Mary's arms. This was not making the matter any better, and in the second attempt the knot was tied in the wrong place.

“The dog is troublesome,” said Mary, simply. “Get you out of the way, Argus.”

“’Tis all my awkwardness, Miss Aston. You must not drive Argus away. It makes me better pleased with myself to be liked by a dog; and Argus seems to take to me so much that I hope,” he said hesitatingly, “he and I shall soon be friends. I will not blunder so again.”—The knot was tied, and so was one which Edward could never undo all his life after.

What little things falling in with our dispositions determine the course of our affections. The liking of an old family house-dog, acting with a first impression, did more to fix Edward in favor with Mrs. Aston and her daughter, than any one of the party was aware of.

“What has my brother been about? Why, I declare, Miss Aston, you will make a very florist of him. At home, he never thinks of moving one of my plants into the sun for me of a cold day. He scarcely looks at them; and says that he had almost as lief be shut up in a room full of stuffed birds, as in one so stuck round with flower-pots. He will bring home a pocket full of mosses, and some poor little field-flower now and then, to be sure, but if I ask the name of one of them, it is something that he learned, when a lad, of some ploughboy,—for he knows not one word of Smith or Bigelow.”

“You forget my woodbine, Harriet, under my study window.”

“Why, so I did; though if I chose to deny that you had one, nobody would believe you, after such bungling work as you made with Miss Aston’s just now. Now I think on’t, you have nursed yours in that particular place, merely because when you were young and foolish enough to believe the story of little Jack and the bean, you stole half a dozen green ones from the cook, and planted them there to see if you couldn’t climb up to the moon, as well as Jack. So there it stands a remembrancer of unsuspect-

ing, youthful innocence, and a memento of early hopes disappointed."

"Do you run all your friends in this way," said Mary, "or has your brother good-naturedly consented that you should exercise your wits upon him, that you may spare your other friends? I hope there is some such compact between you, else I must always be upon my guard with you."

"As to a compact, Miss Aston, you will know all about that one of these days. I've no doubt your sagacity will find it out soon enough for me. In the mean time, I would advise you to go on independent of my foolish humour; for, be assured, however like paradox it may look, nothing so lays people open as aiming to act always upon their good behaviour."

"You speak with a wit's confidence, Miss Shirley, but as your observation sorts well with my judgment, I'll e'en follow it. And if my heedlessness brings down your ridicule upon me, I shall, at any rate, have one to help me bear it," said she, slightly colouring, and dropping her lids as her eyes met those of Edward, turned with a serious earnestness upon her.

How hard it is at certain times, when we are most in need of it too, to find something to say!—except to the practised, who are never tortured by embarrassment, and never wanting to themselves. Harriet had moved forward to speak a word or two to Mrs. Aston, and Mary and Edward remained together feeling sufficiently awkward, and all the while conscious that the embarrassment of each was known to the other.

We are forever searching after great and marked causes for important events, and cannot be content to let our deepest and strongest feelings come from the small, unnoticed incidents of life. Yet an unthought of word dropped in discourse, the voice that utters it, or the momentary look that goes with it, oftentimes thrills us more, and enters with a more quickening sense into our hearts, than all the purposed and well ordered terms of rhetoric. To those who have something which makes them kindred to one another, these are beautiful revelations of each others nature. Delicate and accorging minds hold intelligent discourse in half uttered words, and shifting movements, and passing expressions of the face. It is like the imagined intercourse of angels, whose thoughts and feelings are interchanged by

strange and wonderful sympathies, and need no tongue to speak them. It is so in early love with those whose characters are in agreement. And in the present case there was little want of a formal declaration. Not that Edward or Mary entered into a self-examination of their hearts; but a peculiar delight was felt by each for the first time, and life seemed a new existence to them.

"It is a fortunate thing for me," said Edward at last, "that I have a multitude of foolish things about me, for my sister to make amusement out of. She would scarce care a jot for me were I a piece of perfection. She says that she cannot away with those proper folks who never commit themselves."

"Her interest in the world will not be likely to lessen, if it measures itself by people's follies," said Mary.

"What *she* are you talking about?" said Harriet, turning round. "Are you putting your heads together to make mutual defence and secret alliance against my declared hostility? Come, I must break this up in good time. Your mother is going into the house, Miss Aston, for it is growing chilly. And don't you see the mist

wreathing up along the meadow yonder, like the cigar-smoke which my brother's sprightly companions let out by mouthsful on the green woollen table-cloth after dinner?"

"It will do no more harm to-night than their smoke, Harriet, for the moon is rising betimes to keep it down in the lowlands; and if you will ask Miss Aston to walk to the end of the lane with you, I will insure her a walk back safe of all colds."

"I hardly know whether I shall ask her," said Harriet, at the same time taking her arm within her own and walking on, "for you must know, Miss Aston, that my brother, though he generally avoids our sex, yet, when caught amongst them, is one of the most scrupulously polite gentlemen in the world. Now only think of his situation when we reach the end of the lane! How shocking to see you returning by the dark, giant trunks of all these trees, and without a protector! And yet it would never do to leave me to foot it home alone, though I am his sister. Depend upon it, we should both have to leave him in his difficulty, and I dare say he might be found standing there at any hour of the night,

all in the moonshine, like a gate-post new set to support an old one."

"Your imagined difficulty is all over now, Miss Shirley, for here comes one who has been my brave gallant this many a day," said Mary, patting Argus on the head as he made up to her side. "I have half a mind to turn you off with him and ask Mr. Shirley to wait upon me, to punish you for all you have said to-night."

"That would hardly be fair, Miss Aston. My sister's ridicule might hurt the poor fellow's feelings, and, though very sagacious, the odds might be against him at an encounter of wits."

They soon reached the gateway with one common and blending sense of happiness.

From the air of politicians, it must be a mighty easy matter to see into the causes of all the great changes in the world. There is scarce a word of truth in all they say, let them talk about it ever so plausibly. From your intangible, theoretic German, down to your mere matter-of-fact man, who dates Buonaparte's overthrow from the rise of sugars in France, they are all wrong. The causes assigned by each may have a share in what is done. So we may cut a twig, and set it in the ground, and keep the earth loose

about it, and in a few years what diminutive things we look like under its long, cool branches! Its growth is as hidden as it is silent, and when it lays itself out upon the air a beautiful mystery, with its web of glossy leaves interwoven with golden sunshine, do we look up into it with any other feeling than that of glad worship? And yet we know more of its origin, and had more to do with making it what it now is, than we have part or knowledge in a tythe of what we decide on so familiarly.

If outward and noted events keep us so in ignorance of their nature, what are we to do with the subtile movements of the mind? They are quick or slow, they agitate us violently or are scarcely felt, hurry us suddenly forward after what we a little before followed sluggishly and at intervals, or turn us about in pursuit of that which we had passed by with indifference; and all from causes so strange or so hidden, that we cannot comprehend them, nor search them out.

Edward within an hour or two had passed through some of the most simple and ordinary events that take place in our common intercourse; yet he had come out of them altogether changed. He who had looked with an idle eye,

and with an estranged mind upon what was the concern of others, in an instant found his whole being swallowed up in that of another.—“How gross is every thing else on earth,” said he to himself, “compared with the beautiful refinement of a woman !” And how monotonous and tame and indistinct was the being of his imagination at that moment, compared to Mary Aston !

After walking home in silence with his sister, he continued rambling about. The house was too close and confined for him. There was a quick and warm pulsation through him, and his whole frame was expanding and beating with new life. Beautiful images of the brain were coming and going fast and bright as the light, and all things that drank the moist night air and slept under the moon, or shone and moved beneath it, gave him a new delight, and he loved them more than ever. He was not sensible how far he had wandered, till the low, broad chimney of Mrs. Aston’s house met his eye as it stood out in strong and sharp relief against the moonlight. Though alone, the colour rose in his cheek, and he felt a fluttering at his heart. His whole soul was in a moment laid open to him. What he had not been conscious of as being any

thing more than one of those bright and hopeful moments which visit us sometimes, we know not why, when "an unaccustomed spirit lifts us above the ground with happy thoughts," he now found to be one of the most serious circumstances that can happen to a man of sentiment ; and he was forced to acknowledge to himself that he was in love.

Almost all men at some time or other are carried out of their course by influences that act upon them, with the power and silence of the currents of the ocean, and ignorant how to keep their reckoning or careless about it, the bigger part are wrecked. Edward found that he had been swept along without knowing it. Still all was so beautiful, he did not consider whither it was carrying him, for the clouds and jutting rocks and islands with all their trees upon them, "glassed themselves" in the sea, and made a fairy show for him to gaze down upon.

He drew near the house. As he moved along under the thousand branches of the large trees, their noise over his head was like that of the surf. There was something ominous and wizard-like in the confused and wild multitude of their motions and sounds, and a melancholy fore-

boding crossed his mind like the shadow of a cloud. As he passed out from underneath their shade, his cheerfulness returned ; and as he looked towards the dwelling of Mary Aston, he felt a blessing on him. The uncouth variety and conceit in the old building looked more grotesque than before, in the moonlight, and the shadows of the odd peaks and projections, falling at random upon it, seemed like the fantastic creatures of the night, holding their games in its sides and nooks. It was a tolerable representation of the mind of him who was looking at it. For images and thoughts were going through that without order, and of which he knew not whence they came nor whither they tended. His whole intellect and all his sensations were under the sway of some powers without him, which at one time expanded him with joyful hopes, and then again withered him with fearful and causeless despair. He lingered near the house a long time, till at length the sense of the endless duration and of the continued going on of life, with which nature impresses us, gradually gave a steadiness and cheerfulness to his thoughts ; and the fixed sky, and bright moon, and the image of Ma-

ry Aston, altogether wrought his soul to harmony, and he returned home tranquil and happy.

A real lover is quite an unaccountable creature when awake; it would be altogether in vain to attempt describing his dreams. Edward did not wake, however, in that state of composed indifference in which we generally are when coming out of sleep. Before he was roused to a full possession of his faculties, there was a vague notion of something important to be done, or of some uncommon event in which he was concerned.

He did not find his sister at the breakfast table to tease him and divert him from his silent abstraction.—He grew more and more restless as the day advanced—his books seemed dull—he was wearied of sitting still, and as tired of walking. When we are in perplexity from having forgotten what we came after, we go back to the place we started from to set all right. Had he followed this method and gone to Mrs. Aston's, he would have rid himself at once of all his uneasiness. He was sensible enough of this.—“It is not within rule,” said he to himself. “What preposterous things these rules of society are—for all but blockheads and impertinents.” One in love

must be allowed to say so, yet he is wrong. We all stand in need of these rules more or less; and if they sometimes appear merely troublesome, a little trouble is well for the best of us. Facilities, for the most part, do more harm than good. Children of the next generation will find it so, and thank us little for what our half vanity and half affection are now so busy about for them.

Addison has written an essay showing why it is harder to conceive of eternity as never beginning than as never ending. Edward was as much puzzled to set bounds to his day, as we are to think of eternity without them. It closed upon him at last; and the next went on in the same way, till he found himself near the end of it, in a narrow lane back of Mrs. Aston's dwelling.

Though Mary Aston possessed much of that equability and patience of temper, for which women are so proverbial, it would look like a repetition of what has just been said to describe her feelings since she had parted from Edward. She had walked out towards night-fall, that the cool air might refresh her, and without knowing it, from a feeling which goes for hope, but which perhaps has more of wishing than expectation

in it, that before she returned she might see Edward. Our wishes often give us expectations, but they as often direct our conduct where we have nothing to hope for. If they can do it in no other way, they will bring it about by putting us into a kind of fanciful state, and making the imaginary pass for the actual. It is not very wide of that condition which a child is in when he is mounted upon a walking-stick and plays it is his horse. It is a little ludicrous and mortifying, that wise and tall men should be caught in this way riding their own canes, so we will say nothing more about it.

The colour rose in the cheek of each, and their manner was slightly embarrassed, as they approached each other; but the sensitive tremulousness of the voice told more than these, what was at their hearts. Edward of course passed the evening with Mary and her mother. "You must pardon my staying to so late an hour. I am not a frequent visiter, but I never know when it is time to go." This he said as he rose and leaned over the back of his chair. It was some time before he quitted this, and there was longer lingering at the door-step; for Mary's voice made such soft and clear music in the still

night air, and her eyes, turned upward to the moon, were so like a kindred Heaven answering to that over their heads, how could he quit it all to be alone again !

“Is it you, Mrs. Aston, or Mary,” said Harriet one day, “who has wrought such a change in my once steady brother? Formerly he was never abroad, and now is never at home. I can answer the question myself. He comes to moralize upon the sin and vanity of the world, along with your mother, Mary. He rarely talks to girls like us; for he says he seldom meets with any who do not shew that they are all the time having an eye to themselves, let the subject they are conversing about be ever so serious or important. In his brotherly fondness, he would make me an exception, I dare say, did I ever talk seriously. The most I ever arrive at is to make him laugh, and be called a rattle head for my pains.”

“His remark, I fear, is as true as any general one may be,” answered Mary. “And he might have extended it to those of his own sex, though a good deal qualified, had he been as much inclined to observe them. The truth is, both girls and young men appear to more advantage

when conversing with those of an opposite sex older than themselves, than with those of about the same age. I always take most satisfaction in talking with men whose hair is turning grey."

"Should not Mary in all fairness except my grave brother, Mrs. Aston, who goes about looking as if he was always thinking upon something, as our old housekeeper says?"

"That were scarce necessary," said Mrs. Aston, not observing the flush which these few words threw over Mary's face. "I never met with a man who seemed more sincere and in earnest in what he was about. Besides, there is so much of the propriety of principle in his manner, which keeps off all encroachment without any appearance of his being on his guard, and such a simple and unostentatious delicacy, altogether unlike that showy complaisance which passes for good breeding, but is exceeding vulgar, because it supposes an inferiority in him towards whom it is displayed,—that I should argue ill of the character or discernment of one who did not feel the beauty of his conduct upon a first acquaintance."

"What a tell I have got to carry home to my brother," said Harriet, going.

“You must not carry any tells from me, Harriet.”

“Lord, why not, Madam? They are the best things in the world to put folks in good humour. I always manufacture one for my prim aunt, when I go to pass the day with her, as I sometimes have to do, because mother says it is proper to visit our relations.”

“Perhaps your aunt is too old to be injured by them,” said Mary, smiling; yet there is nothing in the world which has turned so many wise men into fools.”

“I will be even with you for your hit at my aunt’s vanity, Miss Mary. And to pay you for your philosophy, which ill becomes a Miss in her teens, I shall dress up the compliment as well as I know how, and when urged to a disclosure, confess that I had it from Miss Mary Aston.”

“Don’t turn your brother’s brain with a tell from a young lady. If you must reveal it, let him know that it came from an old one,” said Mrs. Aston.

“Now I did not expect that from you, Ma’am, who had just said so much about his wisdom, and when it was but the other night that he

talked so gravely about virtue's only being sure when resting wholly on itself, and finding its satisfactions within, and not in distinctions that attend it abroad. Come, Mary, you sha'n't look so gravely and anxiously at me," said Harriet, taking her hand, as Mary followed her to the door. "You need not fear me. And even if I should divert myself with some idle story, I trust," she added a little embarrassed, "he would not take it as any thing more than my foolery." Mary returned the pressure of her hand, and wished her cheerfully a pleasant walk home, as she sprang lightly from the step.

Mary went happy to her chamber, reflecting upon the warm manner in which her mother had spoken in praise of Edward, and thinking her the best mother that ever lived.

Though Harriet was no go-between, and despised matchmaking as heartily as it deserves to be; yet she had such a love for her brother, and took so deep an interest in all that concerned him, and was so desirous that he might shake off that melancholy which too often preyed upon him, by finding an object for his affections to fasten on, that she could not avoid showing how happy it made her to find that Mary and her

brother were so strongly attached to each other. Upon her return home, she could not help letting fall certain expressions and remarks which referred to Mrs. Aston's opinion of him, and showing what she surmised were Mary's feelings. This she did cautiously and in a playful way, for she well knew that Edward was not a man to be talked to, or to talk of his affections, and she knew how to respect him for it.

“Am I not sure that she loves me?” said he, as he shut his study door. “And why should I delay? Is it not trifling with myself, and, what is more, with a woman of delicate and ardent feelings?”—He had asked himself these very questions before. And those who go to proffer terms of marriage with certificates of property and letters of recommendation in their pockets, must think him a very odd sort of fellow to make such a pother about what they had done before him off hand. Some are blessed with an undisturbed worldly wisdom, while others are carried to and fro, or hurried or delayed by impulses and sensations made up of exquisite pleasures and acute pains over which they have little control. Heaven help these last. The first can take care of themselves, at least for this world.

There are men of a certain refined sense, brave men too, and with not a whit of awkward bashfulness in them neither, who could no more tell a woman that they loved her, just when they chose to fix the time—even when they knew the affection mutual—than Cowper could have spoken in the House of Commons.

Urgent business of his father's prevented Edward's seeing Mary till the next evening. The parlour door was open. He entered the room, and drew near the window where she was sitting, without being observed by her, for she was lost in melancholy to all about her. To feel neglected by him would have been hard enough to bear; but the fear that Harriet, in her thoughtless chat, had said something which had lowered her in the opinion of Edward, was intolerable. The ill opinion of such a man was almost enough to make even the innocent feel the shame of guilt.

The melancholy of those we love, when a token of their interest in us, gives us almost as deep a delight for a time, as when we think we make them happy—perhaps a deeper. For almost any one may move another to pleasure, and the degrees of pleasure cannot always be distinguished. But when one is in grief from some small

circumstance in love, we have an assurance that there can be no mistake. When Edward looked upon Mary's fine face, and saw it overcast, and said to himself, "this is because of me," an exquisite joy thrilled through his heart, at the same time that she was dearer to him than ever. His voice betrayed his emotion as he spoke, and suddenly raising her eyes, she saw his grand, serious countenance lighted up with a smile full of love. There was an answering one in Mary's face, mingled with an expression of confusion, and something like pain from the surprise and the suddenness of the change in her feelings. This was a fine moment for a lover. Not so for Edward,—he was too full of delightful sensations, and could only look on in still rapture. When he at last spoke, his words had little to do with his immediate thoughts, and he was as far from his purpose as ever. She moved a little, and Edward sat down by her in the old window-seat. Her beautifully turned arm and tapering, dimpled fingers were resting on the window-ledge.—"Did I ever see that ring before?" said he.

"No, for I have just received it. 'It was a seal-ring of my grandfather's,'" she added, half laughing.

"Whether your grandfather's or a younger man's," he replied, looking somewhat anxiously in her face, "it is a very curious one." She was half offended and half pleased at this show of jealous regard.—"Upon my word, Mr. Shirley, do you think that it is in my way to wear young men's rings?"—Then changing her voice to her usual tone;—"It is rather a singular one. Will you look at it?" she said frankly, at the same time drawing it from her finger.

If we are not very careful, we cannot take so little a thing as a ring from another without the hands touching slightly; nor is it very easy for two persons to examine curiously so small a matter without their heads coming nigh to each other. It is ten to one that, at any rate, you will feel some stray, curling lock touching every now and then against your forehead. You may know that it is not your own, without looking at it, by the thrill it sends through the brain and bosom. There is a breath too, pure as air, which reaches you,—there is no such atmosphere in the whole world for sensations. There needs no talking at such a moment; there is a close and silent communion of the thoughts and awakened senses, by which we understand each other

better than we could by words, though we culled the choicest from the language of every nation on the globe. Even the tones of love in all their softness, at such a time, would break up the beautiful working of the charm, and turn all to common life again.

Mary took the ring off, but it was Edward who put it on again. It was done with so much respectful delicacy, and with such a gentle touch of the hand, that a dedicated nun could not have been offended at it. Mary's heart beat quick, and as her eyes fell on the ring, she took it as a pledge of love. What need was there of a declaration after this? There was none made that night.

The conversation took a moralizing turn, and a good deal was said about the feelings—not in a prosing way. There was a closer intimacy in the cast of it, than there had been before. They knew the character of each others minds and dispositions as well as if they had lived together for years. Some will say this is impossible. Their opinion may be true enough so far as concerns themselves and half the world beside. Most people might as well be married by proxy, like princes, as to any knowledge they have of

one another's character at the time. And it is a pity that many of them could not remain in their ignorance, so badly are they sorted. The most they ever arrive at is a sort of unwillingness to be long apart, from a habit of having been much together. There are peculiar people, however, who get as much into what is essential in each others character in half an hour's acquaintance, by what is said, and the manner in which things are said or done, as others would, should they pass together the lives of a patriarch and his spouse.—Then you are a believer in love at first sight?—I believe that such a thing may be, or something very like it.

They were walking in front of the house, when the time came for Edward to return home. "Stay a moment, Mr. Shirley; late as it is, you must help me about my woodbine once more, before you go."—As they were training it up, their eyes met, and their looks showed to each other that the time when they first saw one another, and all which had passed since, were in their thoughts.

"What did you think of me then?" said he. "When?" she asked. And half ashamed of feigning ignorance of what she perfectly under-

stood—"think of you? Why, much as I do now, and as I trust I always shall."

"If I interpret this according to my wishes, shall I be right?"

"I hope so," she said colouring, "or what could your opinion be of me else?"

"The same as it always has been and must be. For much as I should suffer to be without your esteem and kind regard, Mary," he said, taking her hand, "you will always have mine. I would say more, but, I know not why, I cannot now. Need I say it? You know what I feel, for I have ever shown myself to you what I am, though I cannot to all the world—All is not well at my heart now. 'Tis strange. I was the happiest man alive a moment ago. No matter,—we shall meet again to-morrow. Whether we meet or not, whether good or ill comes to me," he said, taking her hand within both of his and pressing it earnestly, "may God's best blessing rest upon you forever, Mary."—His voice faltered.—Mary tried to speak. It was in vain. Her lips moved, but there was no sound. She raised her eyes to his with a piteous and imploring look. She was not given to tears, like the rest of her sex, yet they filled her eyes

now. Edward kissed away one that stood on her cheek, and hurried from her with a bewildered mind.

Are not our feelings sometimes like holy prophets, sent to make us ready against evils which we see not, but which are nigh at hand? Edward continued his walk till a late hour, that he might rid himself of the feverish restlessness which tormented his body and mind.

Mr. Shirley had been from home for a couple of days, and had returned during Edward's absence. As Edward drew near the house, he saw a light in his father's study. He perceived by the frequent darkening of the candle that some one was walking the room with a rapid pace. His feelings were in a state to bode ill. It was unusual for his father to be up at so late an hour, and Edward remembered that for several days before his leaving home he had appeared anxious and abstracted. Edward's character was so matured and of so serious a cast, that his father treated him rather as a companion than a son. He entered the house, and went immediately to the study-door and knocked.—“Who's there?” called out his father in a startled voice.—“It is I, sir.”—“O, Edward! Come in!”—In-

stead of turning and giving Edward his hand as usual, Mr. Shirley continued walking the room without noticing him. Edward looked at his father. The room shook as he walked it to and fro, and the foot seemed to grasp the floor at every step. His arms were folded with a convulsive closeness over his breast. The muscles of his face worked violently, and the blood beat like a sea through the clear, high veins of his temples.—“I have been waiting for you this hour,” said he at last in a low choked voice, and without turning his head. His pace grew quicker and quicker—every tightened fibre of his body vibrated with agony, and seemed stretched till ready to snap asunder.—“You are all beggars,” he cried out at last, throwing himself into his chair and gasping for breath. Edward’s alarm for his father scarcely left him conscious of what he had said. He went to him, and taking his hand, spoke in so affectionate a voice that it touched him to the quick. The tears started to his father’s eyes ;—it was the first time he had ever suffered man to see one there. He grew composed at last, and bracing himself to the act, told his son all that had happened.

It appears that Mr. Shirley's fortune had been an ample one ; but having attached certain notions of princely grandeur to wealth, he had in a moment of ambition put the whole at stake in expectation of doubling it ; the speculation failed and he lost nearly all.

"You are much exhausted, sir," said Edward, after talking with his father a long time ; "you must go to bed and endeavour to sleep. In the morning we will see what can be done. I hope all is not as bad as you think." "Good night to you, Edward," said he, much moved, and taking his son's hand. "I hope this news has not come too late to prevent your involving another in our calamity. If not, I know you have too much principle in you to bind such a woman to your hard fortune, let the effort to stop short now cost you what it may." "I know not—I hope—," said Edward, with a struggle. His father pressed his hand and left the room.

For a man of a shy disposition and retired habits, who has nurtured all his romantic thoughts in solitary musing—whose whole intellectual being is made up of sentiment and imagination—who has never thought nor cared for business nor gain—to attempt of a sudden to

change his very nature, and ignorant as an infant, to find out for himself through the intricacies of trades or professions a way amidst shrewd, and calculating, and knowing men, is almost a hopeless undertaking. Though Edward did not want energy or perseverance, he was not presumptuous ; and understanding his own character thoroughly, and how far nature and education had unfitted him for a man of business, he was too well principled and generous to endure the thought of connecting another with his desperate fortune, and of knowing that while he was vainly struggling on, her life was wearing away in faint and delayed hopes.

As the door shut upon him, it seemed as if every living thing had quitted him, and he was left alone upon the bare earth. Though his passions were deep rooted, and the smallest fibres of them were alive with the love of Mary, his father's sufferings had made him for the moment forgetful of his own. And now that he was left to himself, and saw that he was shorn of all hope, it was the thought of Mary that wrung him so.—“A few hours ago, Mary, and you came to me with the elastic spring of a glad and fond spirit, and your countenance opened and

brightened like the morning upon me. It is all over now—the light is shut out, and you must wither in the cold and damp which is ready to fall on you. I could bear my own sufferings, and go to my grave alone, sooner or later, as God might will for me; but I cannot, I cannot bear the thought of what you will suffer—you whom I have taught to love me so.”—He continued walking the room till the birds began sending out short, broken notes, and stirring themselves in the trees. He went to his chamber and fell into a short, uneasy slumber from over weariness.

Though Edward's feelings were stronger than fall to the lot of many, they were of that deep kind, and with such a mixture of the intellectual, as left to his firm mind a grand self-control. He met the family at breakfast with a composed though melancholy countenance. Immediately after, he went with his father to the study, and assisted him, as far as he was able, in adjusting his papers. All was in order in a few days to deliver up to the creditors. As they were few, and gentlemen who had a full reliance upon Mr. Shirley, every thing was done so as to spare his feelings. He was sensible of

it, with mixt pride and gratitude. The family were to leave the mansion and retire to a small house, which, with a trifling income, was all that was left of the estate.

"Harriet," said Edward, the morning after he was made acquainted with his father's loss, "will you write to Mary and tell her what has happened. I cannot see her till every thing is adjusted. It would unman me, and there is much to be done, and my poor father must have all my assistance.—You must command yourself better," said he in a low melancholy tone.—"I will, I will, Edward; but I could not have loved a sister better; and I have almost lived upon the thought of late, that I was to see you both so happy soon! It is all over now."—Edward hurried out of the room.

In a few days the family were ready to depart. They entered an old family coach, and drove off as silent as if following a friend to the grave. Edward was to remain behind till every thing was delivered up. The furniture was sent away to the city to be sold, and he was now ready to follow his parents and sister.

So long as there remained any duties for Edward to fulfil, he bore up firmly against this

sudden destruction of his hopes. The unrelaxed and intense effort had nearly exhausted both mind and body, and yet the hardest trial of all was to come. He was to meet Mary and to part with her, perhaps, forever. "Only a few days ago, thought he, while I was absent from her, I was impatient of every thing till the hour came that I was to meet her. I scarcely dare think of it now."

The solitude of the house oppressed him, and seemed to forebode some deadly evil. "I can bear it no longer; something terrible haunts me; I shall go wild."—As he was hurrying out of the house, old Jacob, the only domestic left behind, met him at the door. "Where are you going this sad night, Mr. Edward? The mist drops from the leaves like rain, and a heavy storm is setting in. It has been brewing all day long, and begins to stir hard in the trees."

"So much the better, so much the better," muttered Edward, pressing forward; then stopping a moment,—“have every thing ready to start by sunrise, Jacob."

"It will be hard to tell that time to-morrow, Sir," answered Jacob, as Edward was shutting

the door, "if I know what the weather will be from one hour to another."

The night had nearly shut in, and the rocks and trunks of trees, which were almost black from the dampness which had been upon them the day through, seemed to Edward's disturbed mind like gloomy monsters watching his steps, as he half caught their forms through the thick twilight as he hastened by them. "Is this the place where I first walked by the side of Mary and heard her voice!" thought he, as he passed along the avenue. "It is all changed, and I am left alone."

He drew near the house. It was lost in the darkness, except where the heavy mist reflected back the light of a candle in the parlour window, giving through the dimness to the peaks and juts the appearance of pale, uncertain flames shooting up into sharp points. No other light could be seen.—"How quietly it shines! And is all within as tranquil as that flame? No, Mary, I will not wrong you; you could not so forget me."

As he came nearer to the house, his blood throbbed quick; he started at the sound of the beating of his heart. He waited a moment to gain a little self-command. The door was open-

ed to him, and he entered the parlour. Mrs. Aston was in the room alone. As she turned and saw the pale and worn countenance of Edward, she started ; but suddenly recovering herself, she went up to him and took him kindly by the hand. " Why have you kept away from us so long ?" inquired she in a gentle but agitated voice. " You do not take us for summer flies, I know, Mr. Shirley."

" O, if I did, madam, I should not come now to trouble you this last time."

" Do you go so soon ? Are we not to see you again ?" " I must go to-morrow," he answered vehemently. " Whether I shall see you again, I know not, I cannot tell."

" Better days will come to you ; you are a very young man yet, Mr. Shirley."

Edward shook his head mournfully, but made no reply. They both continued a long time silent. Edward at last approached Mrs. Aston, and said, " can I not see Mary for a few minutes before I go ?"—A slight colour rose in his cheek, but the sad expression of his face was unchanged when he said, " it would be childish in me, dear Mrs. Aston, to suppose that you are ignorant of my feelings. But," he added, the flush of pride

heightening his colour as he spoke, "I believe you know me too well to fear that, unskilled in affairs as I am, and with little reason from my cast of character for hope of success, I can be so weak or selfish as to bind another to me in my evil fortunes."

"I need not answer that, Mr. Shirley." The tears filled her eyes as she put out her hand once more and gave him her blessing. She left the room, and meeting Mary, told her that Edward was below.

He was walking the room with a hurried step as Mary entered. She attempted to go towards him, but her whole frame shook, and she tottered towards a chair. He sprung forward and caught her before she sunk to the floor. Her face was deadly pale, and her eye for a moment glazed. The sound of his voice recalled her senses, but as she raised her head, there was a wild and haggard look of misery in his countenance that made her shudder, and she covered her eyes with her hand.—"Do you shrink from me, Mary?" said he, in a mournful tone. "O! no, no, Edward. But do not, do not look so strangely at me, as if you were mad. Look as calm and kind as you spoke then, and I will

never turn from you.”—Her head fell upon his shoulder, and she sobbed audibly.—Edward’s face was turned upward—his mouth moved convulsively—he would have prayed aloud for blessing and comfort on her. An inarticulate, throttled sound was all that reached Mary’s ear. She raised her head suddenly and gazed upon his face. How was it changed! Affliction had not left it, but there was a brightness, a rapture in it, which she could almost have worshipped. It was one of those passing exaltations of the spirit which sometimes in our misery lift us for a moment above the earth. It left him and his countenance fell. “Is it gone, is it gone?” cried Mary, “and is there no comfort left us?”

“None;” he answered in a low voice, “none, at least for me, in this world.”

“O, do not add to my misery, Edward, by being ungenerous to me. Do not say that I can change and find comfort when you cannot.”

“Forgive me, Mary, I did not mean to be unkind. I scarce know what I say—my brain has been sadly bewildered with what I have gone through in a few short days. But this parting would not, you know it would not be so hard to me, could I believe you a creature made to

change. Sit down by me and hear me a moment, and then I must leave you.”—He spoke so low and with so much effort that his voice was scarcely audible; yet there was something fearfully determined in it.—“I cannot blame myself for having given way so far to my feelings to-night. After what passed between us when we last met, Mary, it would have been unmanly, it would have been a base insult to the delicacy of your character, for me to have treated you otherwise now than if you acknowledged a return of my love for you. Yet I have told my father that I hoped it was not too late to keep you from my evil fortune, and I have said to your mother to-night that I would never bind you to my poverty. My father may have misunderstood me,—I hardly knew what I said. Your mother must have seen too much to have mistaken me. Both must be remembered. All must end here—here, where we are to part.”

“All? Then all is to be as though it had never been. Say you so, Edward?”

“Do not mistake me, Mary;—we must not part in unkindness. There is enough of woe without that. Though I will not give over without a hard and long struggle, yet I am poor now,

and something tells me, that with all my efforts, I shall die so. The seal of misery is on me, and I shall carry it to my grave. I hope, I hope it is not far off. Could I but see you happy, it would be some consolation to me. No, no, it would not. I could not bear to have all that I have dwelt upon as so peculiar and lovely in your character change, even to relieve you from all you suffer. But you must not be bound to me by any understanding between us. I know there is that in you which will always make me dear to you. Surely I need not speak of myself," said he, with a struggle of agony, "but you never will be mine."

"Are we to see each other no more then? Are we to live only in the memory of each other, and without hope? I will be sincere with you, Edward, and will not add to what you suffer, by saying that you could not make this sacrifice, did it cost you what you tell me it does. I know," said she, raising her eyes to his with a look all of confidence, "the struggle will be as hard to you, and endure as long, as with me. I could not say more. Miserable as it will make us, I know that your feeling is grounded in honour. And though it may seem to have connected with it a doubt

whether time and absence may not change my love for you, I could not wrong you so, as to think you could be so suspicious of me. I know you better, Edward, indeed I do."

"This is noble and generous in you, Mary," said he, pressing her to his heart. "I did not look for all this even from you. Good God! how can I part from you!—It must be done now," he cried, starting suddenly from her. In an instant he was ready. As he turned, she came to him. There was a hopeless misery in her face. She flung her arms about his neck, and hung powerless upon him as he held her to his bosom.

"Mary, Mary," he repeated, alarmed. She made no answer. The wind drove violently against the window, and the rain dashed against it like a flood. She shivered as if the cold blast struck her. "Must he go, and in the storm and rain too," murmured she to herself.—At length she raised herself a little.—"Do not fear for me, Edward,—it is past,—I am better now. Go, go," she said quickly. He stood for a moment—he would have said something—it was all in vain. He caught her madly to him, and then darting from her, left the house.

Mrs. Aston heard the door shut after him. She went down to her daughter, and found her sitting, leaning a little forward with her eyes fixed on the door. She did not move them as her mother entered, and there was a stupor over her countenance. Mrs. Aston took her by the hand, but she did not appear to heed it.—“You must go to bed, Mary,” said her mother, putting her arm round her and gently raising her from the chair. She made no answer, but suffered herself to be partly carried to her chamber. When she was in bed, her mother sat down by her; but she seemed not to notice it; and presently fell asleep, as if unconscious of what had happened.

The night was so dark that the atmosphere was like some deep black body directly before the eye. Edward hurried forward down the avenue. The trees, which raved and roared in the wind like fiends of the storm, served to guide him by their sound. As he quitted them, and their noise died gradually away, he groped his way homeward. He reached the house with a mind as bewildered as in a fearful dream. The instant change from the tumult and uproar of the storm to the perfect stillness and calm within doors, brought back all that had past, with ter-

rible suddenness. He went into the room where Jacob was sitting, waiting for him, and taking up his candle, passed by without looking at him. —“Poor Mr. Edward,” said Jacob to himself, as he took the remaining light to go to bed, “it is hard that you who are so good should suffer so much.”

Edward could not go to rest. He went into his father's study, and then from one room to another, traversing the whole house. He was for a while in that vague and idle state which the mind is thrown into at intervals, in extreme suffering, taking notice of trifles, and remembering a multitude of unmeaning things, while it is unconscious of the affliction which is ready to press again upon it. His eyes wandered vacantly over the naked walls, till they at last rested on the discoloured places where the pictures had hung. He was not sensible at first at what he was looking; but his mind was by degrees moved, and he was presently brought again to the recollection of his condition. If the earth had been swept of every living thing but himself, the sense of desertion could not have weighed heavier upon him. He passed on to his chamber—the wind moaned in the chimneys; and as he

trod over the bare floors, the empty house was filled with the sharp echoes of his steps, which seemed to chatter and mock at him.

The next morning he began his journey. The violence of the storm was over, but it was a dull, drizzly day. He passed it in silence, busy with his melancholy thoughts. He took little notice of what was about him. The home of Mary Aston, as he had seen it in storm and sunshine, was in his mind. He thought of her deep love for him, her serious and unchanging mind, her frank and confiding looks and manner towards him. He would have laid down his life to have given her the peace of mind which was hers before she knew him,—he would have done more—he would have dragged on a life of misery.

Jacob spoke the first word that was uttered.—“We are half through our journey, Sir. I know it by the wood just ahead of us.”—Edward looked out upon the wood by way of answer to Jacob. It was autumn, and the leaves in all their gaudy and varied colours, hung dripping and flagging in the damp air. It seemed a cruel taunt upon the gay hopes and forced mirth of the world. Edward shut his eyes upon the sight, heart-sick. There was none of the spirit

of scorn in him; he felt it rather as an emblem of his own withered joys. The day dragged on heavily, and Edward reached his new home about dark, tired in body and mind.

One who had seen him when he met the family, would have known little of what his inward sufferings were. Besides his aversion from discovering his deeper feelings, even to his own family, he was conscious of the duty upon him, to strengthen the fortitude of his parents. His endeavours were of little benefit to his father. Mr. Shirley was of a high, restless spirit; and his sudden fall from wealth and distinction and the stir of society, heated his warm temperament, and he died of a violent fever after a few months' illness. Edward was as a nurse to his father through his sickness; and after Mr. Shirley's death, was as kind and attentive to his mother, and as anxious about every little thing which he thought would turn away her mind from her afflictions, as if his spirit was free of all trouble, except as it concerned her. Harriet spoke of it in a letter, in answer to one she had received from Mary, not long after Mr. Shirley's death. —“My mother feels his kindness sensibly. She cannot speak of it to me, without shedding tears.

He is soon to leave us. I do not know how my mother will bear his departure. Something, all the while, is making him secretly miserable. I can only conjecture what has taken place, for your letter reveals nothing, and his is so sacred a melancholy, that I dare not break in upon it."

These exertions were for Edward's good. For sensitive minds are prone to a melancholy, which may in the end weaken the intellect, unless they have some object to engage them, and give action to the affections.

The winter was gloomy and cold, the spring opened late, and the weather continued raw and uncomfortable, and there appeared to be a sympathising dejection throughout every thing in nature. The time came for Edward's departure, and he prepared to leave home. Though he had sustained so hard a struggle in parting with Mary, it was not because he thought, for a moment, of sitting down in hopeless inaction. His father's sickness and death had prevented his putting his plans in immediate execution.

In the midst of this dreariness and dejection, a relation of Mrs. Shirley's returned from abroad, after an absence of several years. This gentle-

man's name was Pennington. Though much older than Edward's father, they were many years fast friends. Unfortunately, some trifling controversy took place between them ; and both having a little too much pride, and enough of the punctilious character which was so marked in the old fashioned gentry, a hasty altercation ended in a lasting separation ; for neither of them could think of making advances. Though this was a cause of mutual uneasiness, and each in a short time felt as strong a regard and attachment to the other as they had ever done, Mr. Pennington went abroad on some commercial speculations, without their bidding each other farewell. Edward's father was too proud to suffer his old friend to be made acquainted with his difficulties. He could not bear to think of the obligation which he knew he should be laid under, were his circumstances made known to the kind-hearted Mr. Pennington.—“It was my hasty temper,” said Mr. Shirley to Edward, a little before his death, “which made the breach between us. I have stood out foolishly against a reconciliation, and repentance comes too late.”

Mr. Pennington was much affected on his arrival in the country, at hearing of Mr. Shirley's

loss of property, and death. He wrote immediately to Mrs. Shirley, and spoke in the most feeling manner of the regret and self-reproach he felt in having suffered any criminal pride on his part, to separate him from a man for whom he had always had so great esteem and friendship. He expressed the earnest wish that he might be allowed to visit the family and atone for the past, so far as was now left to him, by every mark of kindness and regard which he could pay.

He arrived in a few days, and was received as one of his character deserved to be. Edward and Harriet were delighted with him. Though a man of deep feelings, he had an energetic and clear mind ; and at the same time that he was not forgetful or careless of the loss of friends, or the sufferings of others, he had that practical philosophy, which by a constant aim at improvement and the happiness of those about us, begets healthful activity of mind, and an habitual cheerfulness of the spirits. Although he had been so long abroad, he had lost nothing of his former character, and his snuff-coloured, broad-skirted coat, waistcoat-flaps, and ample silver shoe-buckles, and long, golden-headed cane, showed him as little changed in dress. His address had

the courtly formality of the old school,—not a mere cumbersome ceremony, because made up of such delicate and respectful regards to others' feelings, that with all its manner, it seemed a simple effluence of the heart. He was altogether an excellent sample of an old-fashioned, thorough-bred gentleman.

As far advanced in life as he was, he had not lost his interest and sympathy in the feelings of the young ; and the uncommon cast of Edward's character, the beautiful propriety of his manner, and the deference which he showed to age, won so immediately upon the old man's heart, that upon hearing from Mrs. Shirley that her son was about leaving home to try his fortune, he cried out,—“ What ! my friend's son turn adventurer, and I sitting at home at my ease, with nothing but my wealth to plague me ! No ! that must never be. If he loves the girl, he shall have her, and that without ever setting foot a ship-board ; for they tell me she is worthy of him ; and that is saying enough for any girl, God bless her.”— Having made up his mind, and with his heart full of the matter, with that alacrity which belongs to a vigorous old man, he left the room in-

stantly for the purpose of falling in with Edward.

They met at the outer door.

"You are going to walk," said Mr. Pennington. "You are rather a grave and silent companion, but as I am a talkative old gentleman, and like to be listened to, it is so much the better. Will you allow me to join you?"

"If you think me worthy being a listener, sir, it will give me great pleasure."

After walking a little way into a wood back of the house, Mr. Pennington began speaking of his large fortune, and his great success in the management of it abroad. "I have done with business, Mr. Shirley, and am growing so old and lazy, that half my fortune, I am afraid, will only be a trouble to me. I have been impertinent enough to seek out from your mother and sister the cause of your melancholy. I depend upon your forgiveness, by telling you I have that will cure it."—Edward coloured, and was about speaking.—"Stop," said Mr. Pennington, "you forget your part,—you are the listener. It is I must do all the talking. I have taken it into my head to do the very thing your father would have done for a child of mine, had our situations been

reversed. I'm going to make you my principal heir. But as I am growing old, and might in some fond moment fall in love with my cook or house-keeper, to make you sure, I've determined to settle an annuity upon you this very day.—Hold your peace, sir,—I've not done yet.—The principal creditor took the mansion-house and furniture ; he has been bought out at a good bargain, and quitted yesterday. So every thing is standing, as when your mother left the place. I intended that she should have gone back to the mansion ; but as she has determined to occupy the small house near it, you have nothing to do but start off in the morning, and take possession of the homestead. And I give you joy of such a fine girl as they say Miss Aston is. There's my hand, Mr. Shirley."—Edward pressed it, and his eyes filled with tears.—“Come, come,” said the old gentleman, forcing a laugh, “’tis altogether a melancholy affair, I know ; but then we will try to drown it in a glass of wine after dinner. The deuse is in it, if I don't make you drink with me for once.”

He turned off suddenly down a straggling foot-path, and left Edward so surprised, that he scarce knew whether it was joy or sorrow that so confounded his senses.

"Your brother is certainly dumbfounded," said Mr. Pennington, after dinner. "You and I, Harriet, have had all the talking thrown upon us, as usual."

"Harriet is always a good girl," said Edward, smiling, "and has done her duty, as she always does, in like cases."

"You must excuse my brother, Mr. Pennington. He is melancholy at the thought of leaving us. Cheer up, Edward ; you sha'n't be left all alone long. We shall be after you in a few days, to take possession of our new habitation. Pray tell me, are you and Jacob to occupy the big house all your days, with Peggy for house-keeper, like the Master of Ravenswood and old Caleb?—By the by, Edward, and before you swallow that wine, glass and all, if you happen to see Miss Aston, give my love to her, and tell her we are coming, and hope to make good neighbours," she added, tapping Edward upon the shoulder, as she ran by him out of the room.

"A madcap, that girl," said Mr. Pennington. "Come, Mr. Shirley, one glass to your to-morrow's journey, and I've done."

Edward bade his mother good by, and prepared for his journey with feelings so tumultuous

that they were almost painful to him. He was stirring with the birds in the morning, and meant to have been off without seeing any of the family but his fellow-traveller, Jacob. But Harriet was too restless with joy to sleep, for she loved and idolized her brother. If she had not, she never would have teased him so. She met him as he was quitting the house. "A pleasant drive to you, Ned!" Then putting on a demure look—"Don't forget to remember me to sister Mary." "You are inveterate, Harry. What, joking before breakfast! Go your ways," said he, springing into the carriage.

It was a fine bright morning after a shower, the sky of a clear, deep blue, and the piled clouds tinged in the sun. The rain-drops were falling from the trees like pearl, and the blossoms sailing gently down, and scattering themselves over the grass like snow-flakes. The air was breezy and fresh, filling the whole frame with sensations of delight; and the brooks ran shining on, prattling like young living things noisy with joy. But an image more beautiful, and fairer than all these, was before Edward's eyes. He saw it between the green trees, and resting upon the white clouds; its voice was in the clouds,

and by the sides of the rocks. There are chosen hours when some men have more of life than falls to others in a multitude of years. Edward's fine steeds swept quickly round the turnings of the road—there was a swift and constant changing of objects going on—every thing on the earth seemed in action, and he felt as if there was a spirit of motion within him, bearing him onward.

Long before sunset, they began to enter upon the scenery familiar to them. They soon came in sight of the house. It was no longer gloomy and deserted, the doors locked, and shutters barred; but the windows were thrown up, and doors all wide open, as if it were holy-day. The domestics who had remained in the neighbourhood, and the tenants, could be seen pointing out to each other the carriage, as it wound up the road to the house. In a few minutes Edward sprang out into the midst of them; and there were more glad faces about him, than, a week before, he could have dreamed were contained in the whole world. So do our notions of things change with our state.

When wishing joy, and how do ye do, were over, old Jacob was in full tide of narrative,

making short stops now and then,—which served as reliefs to his story,—to answer the little by-questions thrown in by some impatient auditor. As soon as Edward could leave those who had come together at the house, without its putting a check upon their merriment, he stole away, that he might be prepared to visit Mary.

Soon after the rich Mr. Pennington's return, there had been rumours afloat that he had bought the old estate—then others of a visit to Mrs. Shirley; and when the occupant moved out, two days before Edward's arrival, the story was rife, though all matter of guess, that Mr. Pennington had restored the estate to the family. These and other rumours reached Mrs. Aston's. Mary began to think it not impossible that some of them might be partially true; then her hopes grew stronger, and with them her fears. For if accounts were true, why had she not heard from Edward? She never for a moment doubted his affection.

As she was sitting at the window, and looking towards the road, she heard two men, who were passing down the lane which led by the house, say something about old Jacob, and young Mr. Shirley's carriage.—“He has come then,” said

she aloud, striking her hands together as she sprang from her seat and ran to the door, as if to meet him.—“Who has come?” asked her mother.—Mary had forgotten at the instant that her mother was in the room.—“No one,” she answered, in a sunken voice; and hurrying into the opposite room, shut the door. Mrs. Aston withdrew to her chamber. Mary’s state of doubt and hope was now torture. She gave herself up to her feelings, and walked the room like one distracted. After a time she grew more composed—a light seemed to break in upon her, and hope became almost certainty.

It was about the same hour, and the evening much the same with that when Edward met Mary the first time. He remembered it as he walked towards the house; and delightful recollections, mingling with his expectations, heightened them, and made them more real. Mary caught a glimpse of him through the trees, at the instant he saw her at the window. They both started back. He then hurried eagerly forward; but she was gone. He entered the house, and opening the door of the room suddenly, Mary stood before him motionless and pale.—“Mary,” he cried, in a broken voice.—The blood rushed

to her cheeks at the sound ; she started forward, and threw herself into his arms. There was a perfect stillness. He felt her heart beat violently as he held her to him. Nature at last gave way—she sobbed out aloud, and in a voice broken with a wild laugh, and scarcely articulate, she cried—“ Is it Edward, and is it true I am his, and are we no more to part ? ”—“ You are, indeed, mine now, Mary,—look at me, and make it real to me.”—She raised her head, her hands resting on his shoulders ; her eyes swam with tears, but a bright joy broke through them which came from the very soul, and her face was all tremulous with the intenseness of love. Edward kissed away the tear on her lid ; and as he gazed upon her face, and fondly parted back the hair from her fine forehead, tears started in his eyes, answering to hers. It was a moment too full of feeling, for words.

When they grew more calm, and Mary sat by him with her hand in his, Edward told her hastily what his good old relation had done for them. Mary breathed out a blessing upon him. Then turning and looking up in Edward’s face—“ to remember,” said she, “ how haggard and strange you seemed when we parted, and now to see you

gaze upon me so fond and happy—O, it makes me forget myself in my joy for what you feel.”

In talking of the past, and giving utterance to the present fulness of feeling, they forgot that the night was wearing away.—“It is time for you to go,” said Mary, at last.—“I know it,” he said. “The thought that we are to meet to-morrow makes me, I could almost say, more than willing to part now.”

As they separated half way down the walk, it was the happiest good night they had ever bid each other.

Life now was one deep and wide joy to them ; all things that grew looked like sharers in one common delight, and a cheerful and sympathizing benevolence made the world appear as if there was nothing but gladness and good will amongst men. Their souls seemed from day to day to become closer united, and to be fast making as it were but one being.—It was not long before Mary became the wife of Edward.

POETRY.

WHEN insect wings are glistening in the beam
Of the low sun, and mountain tops are bright,
Oh let me, by the valley's lovely stream,
Wander amid the mild and mellow light;
And while the red-breast pipes his evening lay,
Give me one lonely hour to hymn the setting day.

Oh sun ! that o'er the western mountains now
Go'st down in glory ! ever beautiful
And blessed is thy radiance, whether thou
Colourest the eastern heaven and night mists cool,
Till the bright day-star vanish, or on high
Climbest, and streamest thy white splendours from mid-
sky.

Yet loveliest are thy setting smiles, and fair—
Fairest of all that earth has seen—the hues
That live among the clouds and flush the air,
Lingering and deepening at the hour of dews ;
Then softest gales are breathed, and softest heard
The plaining voice of streams, and pensive note of bird.

They who here roamed, of yore, the forest wide,
 Felt by such charm their simple bosoms won,
 They deemed their quivered warrior, when he died,
 Went to bright isles beneath the setting sun,
 Where winds are aye at peace, and skies are fair,
 And crimson-skirted clouds curtain the rosy air.

So, with the glories of the dying day,
 Its thousand trembling lights and changing hues,
 The memory of the brave that passed away
 Tenderly mingled ; fitting hour to muse
 On such grave theme, and sweet the dream that shed
 Brightness and beauty round the destiny of the dead !

For ages, on the silent forest here,
 Thy beams did fall, before the red man came
 To dwell beneath them ; in their shade the deer
 Fed, and feared not the arrow's deadly aim ;
 Nor tree was felled in all that world of woods,
 Save by the beaver's tooth, or winds, or rush of floods.

Then came the hunter tribes, and thou didst look
 For ages, on their deeds in the hard chase
 And well-fought wars ; green sod and silver brook
 Took the first stain of blood ; before thy face
 The warrior generations came and past,
 And glory was laid up for many an age to last.

Now they are gone—gone, as thy setting blaze
 Goes down the west, while night is pressing on ;
 And with them, the old tale of better days
 And trophies of remembered power are gone.
 Yon field, that gives the harvest, where the plough
 Strikes the white bone, is all that tells their story now.

I stand upon their ashes in thy beam,
 The offspring of another race, I stand
 Beside a stream they loved—this valley stream ;
 And where the night-fire of the quivered band
 Showed the grey oak by fits, and war-song rung,
 I teach the quiet shades the strains of this new tongue.

Farewell ! but thou shalt come again—thy light
 Must shine on other changes, and behold
 The place of the thronged city still as night—
 States fallen—new empires built upon the old—
 But never shalt thou see these realms again
 Darkened with boundless groves and roamed by savage
 men.

THE

IDLE MAN.

No. IV.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle. *Cropper.*

NEW-YORK:

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

1822.

Southern District of New York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle.

Cropper.

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. THOMPSON,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

MEN AND BOOKS.

"Read, and fear not thine own understanding."

Shirley's Preface to Beaumont and Fletcher.

"Look around !

Mark how one being differs from another ;

Yet the world's book is spread before each human brother."

Barton.

WHATEVER comes from the press of this country, however small may be its pretensions, deserves our notice. Every thing published here must have some influence. We have not done, nor are we doing so much, that our poor things are lost, and our worst unknown. Ours is rather a solitary way, over which few minds have as yet travelled, where every thing that has been there may be seen, and where all that appears will be known and may be tried. Our failures are as obvious as our successes, and it becomes us to distinguish between them. It is idle to wait for

what may be said of us abroad. If we lack feeling, and withhold patronage ; if our judgment be a prejudice, and ill will come of excellence ; if we will hold no communion with minds which happen not to be of our school, and rigorously prescribe the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, to the current of thought and the reaches of the imagination, our speculations about what we mean to be, or to do, will avail us nothing. Our duty to ourselves is a plain one ; we must estimate fairly and value honestly, whatever may have as an end literary character, or, if you will, intellectual distinction. It is time that a good spirit were amongst us—a spirit which will welcome whatever is well done, no matter by whom ; which shall give to general opinion, or proffered criticism, the character for liberality claimed for our institutions, and secure to those who come forward practically in aid of literature, a good reception and a fair treatment. There appears to be little in the way of such a course. Public opinion, as it regards works of science or literature, does not flow in the channel of party, whether of taste or politics. There is too little of local prejudice yet current amongst us, to lead us to look for the characters of authors or their books in geographical distinctions.

Though it be a comparatively easy course, it is not without its difficulties. Little has been done here of a purely literary character. The number of literary men, who have appeared at any particular period or place, has been too small to take up much of our attention, or to make patronage a pleasure or a duty. Our writers, with very few exceptions, have not depended for their bread upon their books. One successful effort has rarely been followed by another ; and either from indolence, or the fear of losing what may have been gained, the field has been left as soon as entered. Our literature has thus been trusted to accident or caprice, and from the time of Brown down to the present moment, so wide are the chasms between its parts, that you would hardly believe they belonged to each other. It is certainly not strange that so little interest has been taken by the public in what is doing here of a literary character. But the want of a general feeling on the subject has this obvious effect ; it leaves the business of criticism or literary opinion to be managed by a few. From being thus limited, literary interest comes to be little more than individual opinion ; and private feeling, or individual prejudice, not only settles the most in-

teresting questions in our literature, but decides the fate of our authors.

To go no further with this now, I would mention a rule or two which I have laid down for myself. My way has always been to judge of writings by their own individual merits solely. I do not stop to ask whether the writer has thought or expressed himself as others have, or as I should have done, but I endeavour to trace attentively the operation of his mind in its progress of thought, and to learn with what faithfulness this has been followed out. I always try the character of a work by its correspondence, or want of correspondence with the thoughts and feelings which have already occupied my own mind, and with those which may have been suggested while reading it. In fewer words, I judge for myself; and if a man is incapable of doing this, he has no right to use the opinions of others, for he can judge no better of them, than of the subject which they concern. I know of no other rational method, by which to make up an opinion of books which relate either to the imagination, or to morals. We are not competent judges in either case, unless in some of our hours we have been conscious that we are thinking beings, and have given these lucid inter-

vals to the contemplation of things which elevate and delight our intellectual nature, and to the observance of their operations on the minds of others, as they are laid open to us in books.

This mode of judging a book by its own merits is altogether opposed to the besetting sin of popular criticism. This consists in the comparison of different books—the works of different minds—with each other, and in finding in a want of correspondence, a reason for condemnation. This mode of judging is founded wholly on the doctrine of *models*,—and in literature there can be nothing more absurd. What literary work is there, which is worth preserving, that does not differ in all that is best in it from every other work? Who are those modern writers who have been most read and most admired? They are those who, with the same language, the same intellectual natures, surrounded by the same scenes, and in the midst of the same incidents, have given you books, which act upon you by an agency so new, so unlike all you have met with before, that you almost feel as if you had received a volume from another planet, and had got with it a gift of tongues to read it. And why should it not be so? With the same material what has not been done in

X nature? Where is the model of nature? In what region has the standard been fixed, and where is the series of nearer and remoter correspondences, which allow you for a moment to judge of the individual magnificence or beauty solely by comparison? We indeed talk of the sublime by one name, as if it were one thing, and so of the beautiful, and the classification answers its purpose well enough. But in nature every thing is individual, and belongs to itself. Harmony here is founded in nothing so little as in mere resemblance; and the intellectual nature harmonises with the material; and hence it is, that its greater operations, resembling each other only in their being greater, are varied by every thing that is novel, in the manner under which they are presented. You might as well demand of men to look alike, before they are admitted into good company, as to make the reception of books depend on the faithfulness with which they resemble a model, whether in the thought they contain, or in their manner.

X It is the habit of our readers to judge of books by comparison. They take it for granted, in the first place, that our writers are imitators, for, say they, they use the English language. They next discover whom they resemble. Their last and

easiest task is to condemn, and this they do, because our copyists, as they consider them, do not equal their originals. I was amused, the other day, with a specimen of criticism upon *Salmagundi*—"It seems to me," said an acquaintance, as he threw down the volume he had been reading, "that it is almost as poor as *Dean Swift*." This was a kind of literary estimation, and founded on comparison, entirely new to me. This mode of judging has one evil in it worth mentioning. It tempts men to run a parallel between books essentially different in their object and character, and to find their distinguishing qualities in the different degrees of success with which it is taken for granted, that the same things have been attempted; and so it becomes the misfortune of our writers to be identified with each other by public opinion, and to see all that is distinctive in each sacrificed to a most absurd mode of criticism.

There is another rule which has much weight with me in reading and forming opinions of works of imagination or feeling. I never allow myself to be influenced by the opinions of what are termed professed scholars. I think that he who commonly passes for a scholar is a most unsuitable judge of what belongs either to the imagination

or the heart. He is called by his profession to the revolutions of literature, and the different styles which have characterized its periods, as they are termed. His are the rules by which men have written, who, in the lofty exercises of their fine minds, never dreamed of a rule. His business is with language, not as the expression of thought, but as a human invention, and you always find him occupied with the details of its artificial arrangement. It is, soberly, not very important to him what the thoughts in a book are; and its words and language are more likely to be regarded by him as pieces of the material which are to be worked up in the mechanical business of sentence-making, than as something originally proceeding from a mind—the representatives of intellectual things. This order of men are so much the creatures of rule, that their systems of criticism put you in mind of a book on Dutch horticulture, and your very soul aches to see them straiten thought and smooth down feeling, till they look as little like nature as a Flemish avenue, or a hanging garden. These pattern critics all have their idols. You must bow down to these and practically worship them too, let them be ever so monstrous, or all you do

will be accounted abominable. The worst of all is, these idols shift with ages, and every age has many. Hence you have as many schools of taste as generations of men; as if man's mind, like his dress, were to take a new shape in the succession of years, or from the caprices of rhetoric masters.

The truth is, the great features of the mind always remain the same, and you might as well undertake to proselytize nature, as to turn its inherent and essential qualities from their original purposes. Men always have appeared and always will appear, though the intervals may be long, and the darkness great, who will in this way connect their own age, with the best of those that are gone,—who will bring you new treasures from a vein their own hands have wrought, and make you and the succession of all ages, venerate and love them, for a bounty so pure, so vast, and so exhaustless. There is something mysterious and fearfully solemn in the intellectual nature of man, thus elevated and distinct from every thing around it. Homer, and Milton, and Shakspeare, hardly seem to have been of the species of those they lived with, or with ourselves. They remind you of those

unmeasured mountains, on the tops of which a man might not live ;—they seem to have had communion with what eye hath not seen, and there found the way to man's heart, and opened to you its profoundest depths.

There is another order of men which claims the privilege of exercising a power over authors. It is the great body of the reading part of the community. It is popularly called the world ; the public ; the people of taste, sense, and discrimination ; the discerning few, &c. &c. As a body, this order is capable of doing much good, but it unfortunately happens that it is too often split up into parties and clans, or is under the influence of scholars and reviewers.

Now, whether aimed at, or not, it is too much the tendency of such an influence to tempt men to yield the exercise of their own judgment to any body who will judge for them ; to make them superficial ; to give them partial views,—yet with an authority that commands their deference. People are apt to rest satisfied under this authority, and it is seldom that they are disposed to go to their author and try his work by their own minds. Or what is worse, they sometimes affect to be critical, too ; and with the common

sense which nature had given them, bewildered amongst rules but half learned and not half understood, they take a book in hand, as if it were a thing on which they were to pass judgment, rather than as something that was to enrich their minds and give impulse to their feelings. To make their pretensions sure, they become censorious, dogmatical and loud ; for dealers in second-hand opinions are always more positive and talkative than are those from whom they get them—just as your retailer makes more show and bustle with his wares, than does the importer of whom he buys them.

So that, with the exception of a few men of thorough taste, one is pretty sure of meeting with a juster judgment on what is in a book—a truer feeling for its delicate touches, and a quicker apprehension of what is peculiar and imaginative in it, amongst sensible, self-taught men, who live out of what we choose to call literary society, and who have been in the habit of trusting to their own understandings, than amongst those who are forever reading, to talk about books, and who meet to compare and club opinions. It is no wonder that the man of feeling grows weary, and is ready to say with

Sterne, that "the cant of hypocrisy may be the worst, but that the cant of criticism is the most tormenting." There may indeed be hypocrisy in this as in every thing else ; and it is found where a man has buried what was native in his feelings and taste under a mawkish fastidiousness, an affected elegance, or a vain pedantry of rule—where he does not love with all his heart what he would appear to, but mistrusts its excellence, and has a misgiving of mind that what he pretends to look down upon may be above him. It is impiety against nature to complain that so few are born with a perception for the beautiful in thoughts and things. Most men could see well enough, did they not let fashion and affectation lead them blindfold.

It is in this that the principal evil lies ; and it is unfriendly to literature. A man's own good sense, for the main purposes of literature, is to him infinitely better, than the judgment of any body else. Books are talked about as amusing, entertaining, pleasant ; and authors, in the highest departments of writing, are regarded as contributing to some momentary gratification ; coming in at those odd times when nothing else can enter. Poetry, the very highest effort the

mind can make, has been the most abused. These different terms, which, however, mean the same thing, have possibly been applied by the leaders of taste to literary works for the sake of convenience ; but they have done much to impair the best influences of the best books. They are a base currency on the great exchange of letters, but writers have been taught to regard them as the true.

One of the effects of all this is to make a man propose to himself in writing, an end as fatal to originality, as it is opposed to all the highest objects in writing. It makes him look to the publick, the world, or the what-not, instead of keeping his eye steadily fixed on his own mind and his own heart. He must write to please, and the inference is inevitable, he must write like some body else who has succeeded in pleasing. You make him dependent where he should be most free. You put before him a mould, by which his opinions and feelings must all be cast,—you give a direction to that which, if it be worth any thing, ought for the time to lead you.

Books are merely the expressions of the operations of the mind. When, of the highest character, they act upon the reader who can

apprehend them, in precisely the same manner that his own intellectual operations act upon himself. You forget the agency of your eyes while reading them, and are like one in a state of perfect abstraction, when all that is beautiful or sublime in nature may be around you and put you into a happy state, without your being conscious to yourself of its existence. Books owe this to their truth. It matters not what the subject may be. They have this interest exactly in proportion to their truth, to the fidelity and freedom with which the author has given you his own mind. Hence too is the infinite variety, as well as the high delight afforded by the best works. We seem to have exchanged minds with the author, and so much are we the better for the exchange, and so far are we from regretting the temporary loss of our identity, that if an occasional consciousness intervene, it is filled up with wonder that we could ever have thought so well or enjoyed so deeply what is so exclusively intellectual. This high interest does not belong to the mass of books. It enters however into the whole of such reading as engages us enough to prevent the obtrusion of a wish to quit it.

All are capable of understanding and feeling this character of books. It asks neither for a *vade mecum* of criticism to be properly estimated, nor for the authority of another individual to make it interest us. By the independent and unprejudiced exercise of individual opinion, in the judgment they may pass on books, and the patronage they extend to writers, the great reading body of the community may come to exert a most important influence over the literature of a country. They distinguish at once the writer who has found in his own mind the materials of his work, and the judgment for using them, and they offer the strongest motive for the best intellectual exertions, in the honest reception they are willing to give to what deserves it. They are better judges of works on life and character, than any other class of readers. Their whole experience of common life has taught them how infinitely varied are the beings and things around them. Their children, if they have any, have in their diversity of character, feeling, and power, excited the strongest interest; and their purpose with them has not been to destroy this individuality, but to make it answer the greatest good. The

same mode of perception, and a like use of it, they apply to books. The peculiarities of these are found to constitute the chief of their interest, and, as in the case of real life, are at once perceived to belong rather to the individual, than to his subject.

The intellectual nature of man resembles its Creator most in the variety it can produce, whether of sublimity or beauty, or of any other quality, from the most common, or most simple elements. If we will have such products, we must neither limit, nor direct the power. We are not to judge harshly of a writer, because in the quiet of our own career the violent passions had never crossed our path, for in such a case we may be incapable of a wise judgment; and if we have had no cause for grief, nor felt it with all its causes, there is still a sacredness in the record of sorrow, with which, though we may have no feeling, it were inhuman to trifle. It is not however necessary for a writer to have experienced what he describes, nor for the reader to have felt it before, in order to understand it now. When Shakspeare was said to have dipped his pen in his own heart, it was not implied that he had

felt the anguish of Lear, or the deep melancholy of Hamlet. It was simply that he knew the character of all the passions and emotions of the heart in their fullest reality, and was open to their influences; and hence in reading his histories you feel you have to do with real life. It is the same with all writers who set before you the truth; and your want of sympathy with the imaginary being or situation is the same thing, as if you were to withhold it from the realities of common life.

Some men, it is true, are constitutionally cold, and some are made so by education. The work is generally begun by suppressing feeling or ridiculing its expression. It is perfect when the adept tries its lessons upon those whose feelings, and the expression of them have not been submitted to the same discipline. It would seem that it was the part of a cold heart to chill that of others. These people sometimes tell you they want sentiment—are not sentimental,—in other words they want the perception of the tender and lovely, of the sublime and the beautiful of a moral nature, and they want the sympathy which would enable them to feel with those who have it. Sentiment

in its genuine meaning has the same relation to the moral nature, as taste to the external. It is another expression for moral taste, and those who disclaim it have parted with one of the most valuable principles of man's intellectual nature. They have feeling of some sort, but the tendency of their system is to confine it to themselves and the few who may resemble them; and they make altogether a choice and happy fraternity, for their imagination, which has died to every thing else, is busied in fancying in themselves qualities for which each one values himself and congratulates his brother. The world to such beings is a confused and disjointed machinery, going by jerks and starts, grating in all its movements, and the only lesson it teaches them is to keep out of its way. They have no eye for the beauty of its structure and free play of its parts, but form to themselves, in its stead, a system, which, whenever in motion, we find crushing under it all sympathy with what is purest and best in the imagination and heart.

“Tis great pity
That such as sit at the helm provide no better
For the training up of the gentry. In my judgment,
An Academy erected, with large pensions
To such as in a table could set down
The coiffes, cringes, postures, methods, phrase,
Proper to every nation”—

Massinger.

“There to learn—courtly carriage,
To make amends for his mean parentage ;
Where he unknowne and ruffling as he can,
Goes currant cash where for a gentleman.”
Hull's Satires.

IN a country where affairs of public interest are brought so much within the scope of every individual, I have often thought it fortunate that men of a quiet and retired habit, are suffered to remain undisturbed in the indulgence of their tastes. I was startled, however, the other evening, at a club I occasionally frequent, by a proposition from my friend Ned Fillagree, which went to trouble this order of things. He, with great seriousness and apparent benevolence of intention, after bestowing a feeling panegyric upon the multitude of benevolent institutions

which exist amongst us, proposed a plan which he said would be the means of giving to a very worthy class of our fellow citizens an opportunity of mixing in the gay world. This class comprised those whose pecuniary means would not admit of an interchange of expensive entertainments with the wealthy, but whose talents for conversation and whose entertaining qualities would make them an acceptable addition to any polite company. Ned conceived that all such were kept out of society by that species of false pride, which would not permit them to receive favors when there was no return to be made; and his scheme he thought must completely remove the difficulty. He would have an association formed and duly incorporated under the style of the, "Fashionable Resuscitating Society"—to be composed of the wealthy givers of great entertainments,—and a fund to be raised in the following manner:—On occasion of any member of the society, whose means were undoubted and abundant, giving a ball or other entertainment,—such member to pay down a specified bonus to go towards the general purse. But where the ability to contribute could not be truly estimated by the style maintained, (cases of

not unfrequent occurrence and generally to be traced to the instrumentality of some sagacious mother of half a dozen marriageable daughters,) Ned would modify the exaction in such manner as merely to affect the quantity of music, so that such persons, when they gave a ball, by having one or two fiddles the less, might meet the contingency and still enjoy the honours of membership:—The funds of the society to be at the disposal of a discriminating committee, whose office it should be to ferret out social worth in obscurity, and to supply the means and see them appropriated in the true spirit of the institution.

Ned prides himself not a little on his good footing in the beau monde, and as he cannot separate the ideas of bustle and enjoyment, I never could convince him that my retired mode of life was the result of choice. I observed Ned, as he prefaced his proposal, to eye me with a peculiar beneficence of expression—something like that of a courtier bestowing a boon; and I now marked his entire complacency of visage as he added, “that he believed his plan, if carried into operation, would go farther to prevent suicides, than all the penal laws ever enacted.”

The pause which generally follows the introduction of any thing strange, was in this instance of short duration. No sooner had Ned made an end of speaking, than up started a trig figure, which I had never before seen, making no scruple to proclaim his hostility to Ned's suggestion, on the ground of there being no existing grievance of the nature contemplated in it. He contended that no one possessing the requisite qualities for high life need fear neglect under the present order of things. On the contrary, the press of invitations which assailed men of wit and fashion, he declared to be a growing inconvenience, and the one most requiring remedy. He portrayed the shifts and devices to which men of this stamp are often obliged to have recourse in keeping their fashionable friends in good humour, while resisting their importunities; and in the course of his harangue gave us pretty distinctly to understand, that he himself was amongst the sufferers from this species of polite persecution. He vowed it a great bore; and holding his hat in one hand, adjusting his gloves, and screwing his face into an expression of pensive resignation, instanced the necessity he was this evening under of making his bow at

no less than five different parties, thereby being compelled to forego the happiness of a longer stay amongst us.

During this harangue, I remarked a gentleman sitting by himself at one side of the fire-place; and I thought I discovered something of sly significancy in the glances with which he occasionally surveyed the dissenting gentleman. I also imagined once or twice, as he knocked the ashes from his cigar, that I could perceive in his countenance a suppressed inclination to laughter. As soon as the object of his scrutiny was out of the room, I edged my chair near to where he was sitting, and as there was great good nature indicated in his appearance, ventured to ask if he could inform me who the gentleman might be that had just left us. He answered me with a leer, "that this person was well known to him, but he believed it would puzzle the best of them to tell how he had made his way into the club." "He is, however," X *myself* continued the gentleman, "considered a prodigy of ingenuity in this way—a perfect master, Sir, of polite enginery;—no fortress of reserve being too much for Bob Brazen. His element is a fashionable atmosphere. He will foretell you a

ball or cotillion party with as much precision as it is said a person of sensitive nerves will discern the approach of an earthquake. I remember last winter when my aunt Testy gave her great ball, Bob's calling regularly the five preceding days. During this time none of the family could move abroad without stumbling upon Bob. And on all encounters he never failed referring to the approaching festivities. The fourth day had passed, and aunt was just felicitating herself on having parried all his hints for an invitation, when a knock was heard at the door. It was Bob. This was the last day of grace with him; and his deportment bespoke sad foreboding watchfulness. Every thing was bustle and confusion in the house. Indeed the hurry of household affairs had produced such a disturbance in aunt's stock of complaisance, that seeing Bob passing the threshold at this unfortunate juncture, all efforts to suppress her ire were in vain. On entering the room, he could not but be sensible of the awkwardness of his situation. Assuming, however, a careless, playful air, he thought to make a diversion in his favour by an apt quotation; and placing himself in attitude, began—‘ *This busy hum of prepara-*

tion.' '*Busy hum*, indeed,' exclaimed aunt. 'I must say, Mr. Brazen, we are too busy every way to receive visits this morning'—and turning her back, desired 'that he would more fittingly time any future visit with which he might honour the family.' Neither aunt's action nor tone of voice could be cited as specimens of the conciliatory in eloquence. But Bob's was a desperate case; he was too politic to be over fastidious, and there was no alternative. Affecting, therefore, to understand the last words which aunt let drop, as an invitation to the ball; he observed, as he took his leave, that luckily he should be disengaged and would do himself the pleasure. Accordingly we had Bob Brazen at our ball, in all his wonted sprightliness and unconcern. In truth you will scarcely be at a gay assemblage in town without seeing Bob; and with those who know less of him than I do, the wonder is how he contrives to make his way into so much good company.

Happening one day to be dining with an elderly gentleman, a member of our general assembly from a remote part of the State, I was surprised by my worthy friend's jumping suddenly from his chair and running to the window. 'Pray,' said my friend,

as he took his seat again at table, 'what is the name of the youth who just passed?' 'That,' replied I, 'is Bob Brazen.' 'I thought it was he; and yet he is so changed I could hardly credit it. I am glad, however, to behold him looking so fresh and active. The young man was formerly a townsman of mine, and has caused some stir amongst us. You must know, about three years ago, upon occasion of our academy exhibition ball, Bob, as being the likeliest looking of our youngers, was appointed to conduct the festivities in quality of master of ceremonies. Bob trilled himself out in his best and smartest, and really made quite a dashing appearance; but unluckily, just as he had got the dancers arranged for the second country-dance, his father, a rough, severe old farmer who had a mortal antipathy to merri-making and extravagance, being on his way home from town, happened to drive his team up to the tavern where the company had assembled. Hearing the fiddle agoing, and learning that Bob was of the party above stairs, he did not wait to reason the matter, but seizing his cart-whip, rushed in the first impulse of his wrath, to the scene of action. Bob was in the act of giving a stamp for the music to strike up *'rural*

felicity, when open flew the door, and the grim, raw-boned front of his enraged Dad presented itself. Not the ghost of Hamlet to the young prince could have been more appalling—a general panic and consternation seized upon the whole assembly—Bob stood breathless like one in a trance. The old farmer advanced three paces into the room, leaving space for a person to pass by him to the door; and as he cleared the lash of his whip with one hand, uttered the word '*Bob*' in a tone something between the bark of a mastiff and the discharge of a volley of musketry. The sound of the old man's voice broke the spell which held poor Bob to his place. Awakened to a full sense of his deplorable condition, and knowing how fruitless it would be to demur, he moved with all the alacrity the disturbed state of his nerves would allow, in obedience to a significant signal from the whip-staff, towards the door.—'I'll teach you to junket, you dog,' bellowed the old rustic, as Bob drew near the point of exit—at the same time making such unequivocal demonstrations with his cart-whip, as precluded all possibility of mistake as to his method of instruction. Since that most unlucky evening, Bob has not been seen in our village; and notwithstanding the

testimony of the stage-coach driver, who avers he saw him with a small bundle under his arm several miles from the village on the great road, it was currently reported, and is now the settled belief, that Bob drowned himself in a fit of despair the very night of his disaster. 'I am now happy,' observed my friend the representative, as he concluded his story, 'in having it in my power to clear up all doubts concerning the fate of Bob Brazen; and I am confident in doing so, I shall gladden the heart of many a damsel of our neighbourhood.'

I have troubled you, Sir, with this relation of my country friend's, because I think it has a direct and intimate connexion with Bob's distinguishing traits. It is a generally received opinion that incidents, in themselves trifling, may give a bias to the mind of deep and lasting character. And why is it not natural to suppose that Bob, considering himself in the light of a martyr to the cause of fashion, should become its most zealous votary. I have no doubt that in the recollection of the bitter mortification which attended his entrée into the polite world, he experiences a secret satisfaction in the reflection that he is now beyond the reach

of paternal tyranny. And can it be wondered at, that on one, having a white-oak cart-whip familiarized to his mind as a proper instrument of exclusion, means less potent should fail of their effect?"

Here the communicative gentleman was interrupted by a loud sound of uproar which burst upon us from the other end of the room. Instantly springing up to ascertain the cause of alarm, we beheld a scene of thorough confusion and dismay. The large table, around which we had but a few minutes before left our friends quietly seated, overturned—candles broken—chairs scattered helter-skelter—eager gesticulations on all sides, and the discordant din of twenty voices raised to their highest pitch. In the midst was Ned Fillagree, mounted upon a chair, vociferating, to order, and claiming to be heard; while at the further end of the room appeared a small pattern of a man, writhing under the firm grasp of some six or seven of the stoutest in the company, foaming with rage and uttering the direst imprecations of vengeance. It was some time before order was sufficiently restored to enable me to learn the particulars of the affray.

It seemed there was a young Creole from the West Indies, introduced to the club this evening by one of its most important members. This young gentleman friend Ned most unluckily marked out as a fit subject for his countenance and patronage. 'Tis true the young man's complexion was a little equivocal; but no one except Ned would have attributed to him the honor of affinity with that gallant race, by the conquest of whom Scipio earned his distinguishing appellation. But so it was; and no sooner had the young man seated himself at table, than Ned began to inveigh against the absurdity of a custom which deprives us of the advantages of social intercourse with a very numerous class of our species. Every pause in the conversation was improved by Ned to enforce his favorite theme. The young West Indian, not comprehending the kindness of Ned's motive, remained silent and confounded. This Ned interpreting as the effect of diffidence and self-distrust, which it would be praiseworthy in him to dispel; by way of encouragement, calling on the young man across the table to join him in a glass of wine and proposing as a toast, a health to Mr. Wilberforce, declared that he looked

forward with pleasure to the time when all invidious distinctions of colour should be done away! The West Indian's blood now boiled;—feeling himself most outrageously insulted, he made a desperate pass at Ned, overturned the table in his progress, and occasioned the scene of tumult we witnessed.

The harmony of the meeting being thus completely destroyed, it was judged most expedient to adjourn. As I walked home with Ned, it was amusing to observe how perfectly unconscious he appeared of having been guilty of the least rudeness or impropriety; laying the whole blame of the transaction to the choleric temper of the West Indian. This deadness of perception prevents his ever applying to a right use the many lessons he receives from disastrous experience. Ned is universally allowed to be the best natured fellow living; and were his benevolence of heart tempered with that nice principle of delicate discernment which we understand by the word *tact*, and which seems intuitive in some persons, his would certainly be a most estimable character. He aims at being the active agent and dispenser of all the good that comes to his friends. It appears to be the passion of his mind to cater

for every body ; and in rendering you a service, it is ten to one you are annoyed with his officiousness. With the best possible intentions, he is continually doing things in themselves extremely troublesome and offensive.

Against a system of effrontery, got up in self-complacency and used as a means of self-exaltation, as in the instance of Bob Brazen, a thorough, decided course of conduct could not fail of its effect, and one would not scruple to adopt it. But Ned Fillagree, with all his annoying improprieties, has so much that is sterling, that you are unwilling to deal harshly with him, or forswear his company. From the many good traits in his character, we are led to hope that the faulty may be amended, or at least lessened ; and involuntarily setting about the task of expostulation, we soon find ourselves stopped by his impenetrable obtuseness. On the whole, I fear Ned's case an incurable one, and that he must be classed with that school of restless, sturdy philanthropists which aims at compelling all men to be happy, without regard to fitness of means or variety of taste.

Though it may seem to run counter to good morals, that what is bad should be less offensive

than what is weak, yet we every now and then meet with characters that convince us that it is so. There are men who think of little else beside self-gratification, and who never scruple the means,—who care for us no farther than they may turn us to account,—yet having with all this a certain dexterity which makes them sure of their aim, they become almost agreeable to us against our wills, and oblige us to pass over their faults in spite of our sense of right. Even where they push for their object with more shallow artifice and with impatient rudeness, they rather amuse than disgust; make us good natured and forgiving, and incline us more to laugh than to be angry. While he who is every man's well wisher, and whose life and enjoyment it is to do good, but without having intellect enough to order or well time his purposes, teases us with kind offices, grows ungracious as he grows in zeal, and unjustly shares amongst men, the fate of a grey headed beau amongst the girls, becoming at once our torment and our sport. We are sensible that all this is not right—remonstrate with each other about it, and end with confessing our fault, and wishing it could be mended.

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That we should pass over what is wrong because joined with dexterity and hardihood, is an unmixed evil ; but that bustling, active weakness, however well meant, should move us somewhat to disgust and contempt, has, like most ills, a good in it. For were it otherwise with us, the short sighted and feeble minded might become leaders in what was praiseworthy, and the cause of virtue be lost from its poor support.

MUSINGS.

—“a steadfast seat

Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning.—

—He sate—and talked

With winged messengers ; who daily brought
To his small Island in the ethereal deep
Tidings of joy and love.

—then, my Spirit was entranced

With joy exalted to beatitude ;
The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,
And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with light,
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence.”
Wordsworth's Excursion.

HAVE we looked upon the earth so long, only to reckon how many men and beasts it can maintain, and to see to what account its timber can be turned, and to what uses its rocks and waters may be put ? Do we, with Baillie Jarvie, think it a pity that so much good soil should lie waste under a useless lake, and set against the cost of draining the in-comings of the crops ? Have we lived so many years in the world and been familiar with its affairs, only to part off men into professions and trades, and to tell the due proportions required to stock

each? Must we for ever travel the straight forward, turnpike road of business, and not be left to take the way that winds round the meadows, and leads us sociably by the doors of retired farms? Must all the hills be levelled, and hollows filled up, that we may go like draught-horses the dull and even road of labour, the easier and with more speed? May we not sit awhile to cool and rest ourselves in the shade of some shut-in valley, with its talking rills, and fresh and silent water plants,—or pass over the free and lit hill-tops, catching views of the broad, open country alive with the universal growth of things, and guarded with its band of mountains resting in the distance, like patriarchs of the earth? Must all we do and all we think about have reference to the useful, while that alone is considered useful which is tangible, present gain? Is it for food and raiment and shelter alone that we came into the world? Do we talk of our *souls*, and live as if we, and all that surrounded us, were made up of nothing else but dull matter? Are the relations of life for our convenience merely, or has the fulfilling of their duties none but promised and distant rewards?

Man has another and higher nature even here; and the spirit within him finds an answering spirit in every thing that grows, and affectionate relations not only with his fellow man, but with the commonest things that lie scattered about the earth.

To the man of fine feeling, and deep and delicate and creative thought, there is nothing in nature which appears only as so much substance and form, nor any connexions in life which do not reach beyond their immediate and obvious purposes. Our attachments to each other are not felt by him merely as habits of the mind given it by the customs of life; nor does he hold them only as the goods of this world, and the loss of them as turning him forth an outcast from the social state; but they are a part of his joyous being, and to have them torn from him, is taking from his very nature.

Life, indeed, with him, in all its connexions and concerns, has an ideal and spiritual character, which, while it loses nothing of the definiteness of reality, is forever suggesting thoughts, taking new relations and peopling and giving action to the imagination. All that the eye falls upon and all that touches the heart, run off into

airy distance, and the regions into which the sight stretches, are alive and bright and beautiful with countless shapings and fair hues of the gladdened fancy. From kind acts and gentle words and fond looks there spring hosts many and glorious as Milton's angels; and heavenly deeds are done, and unearthly voices heard, and forms and faces, graceful and lovely as Uriel's, are seen in the noonday sun. What would only have given pleasure for the time to another, or at most, be now and then called up in his memory, in the man of feeling and imagination, lays by its particular, and short-lived and irregular nature, and puts on the garments of spiritual beings, and takes the everlasting nature of the soul. The ordinary acts which spring from the good will of social life, take up their dwelling within him and mingle with his sentiment, forming a little society in his mind, going on in harmony with its generous enterprises, its friendly labours, and tasteful pursuits. They undergo a change—becoming a portion of him—making a part of his secret joy and melancholy, and wandering at large among his far off thoughts. All that his mind falls in with it sweeps along in its deep and swift and continu-



ous flow, and bears them on with the multitude that fill its shoreless and living sea.

So universal is this operation in such a man, and so instantly does it act upon whatever he is concerned about, that a double process is forever going on within him, and he lives as it were a two-fold life. Is he, for instance, talking with you about a North-west passage, he is looking far off at the ice islands with their turreted castles and fairy towns, or the penguin at the southern pole, pecking the rotting seaweed on which she has lighted,—or he is listening to her distant and lonely cry within the cold and barren tracts of ice ;—yet all the while he reasons as ingeniously and wisely as you. His attachments do not grow about a changeless and tiring object ; but be it filial reverence, Abraham is seen sitting at the door of his tent, and the earth is one green pasture for flocks and herds ;—or be it love, she who is dear to him is seen in a thousand imaginary changes of situation, and new incidents are continually happening, delighting his mind with all the distinctness and sincerity of truth. So that while he is in the midst of men, and doing his part in the affairs of the world, his spirit has called up a fairy vision, and

he is walking in a lovely dream. It is round about him in his sorrows for a consolation; and out of the gloom of his afflictions he looks forth upon an horizon touched with a gentle morning twilight and growing brighter as he gazes. Through pain and poverty and the world's neglect, when men look cold upon him, and his friends are gone, he has where to rest a tired mind that others know not of, and healings for a wounded heart which others can never feel.

And who is of so hard a nature as to deny him these? If there are assuagings for his spirit which are never ministered to other men, it has tortures and griefs and a fearful melancholy which need them more. He brought into the world passions deep and strong—senses tremulous and thrilling at every touch—feelings delicate and shy, yet affectionate and warm, and an ardent and romantic mind. The refinements and virtues of our nature he has dwelt upon till they have almost become beauties sensible to the mortal eye, and to worship them he has thought could not be idolatry. And what does he find in the world? Perhaps in all the multitude, he meets a mind or two which answers to his own; but through the crowd where he looks for the

free play of noble passions, he finds men eager after gain or vulgar distinctions, hardening the heart with avarice, or making it proud and reckless with ambition. Does he speak with an honest indignation against oppression and trick? He is met by loose doubts and shallow speculations, or teasing questions as to right and wrong. Are the weak to be defended, or strong opposed? One man has his place yet to reach, and another his to maintain, and why should they put all at stake? Are others at work in a good cause? They are so little scrupulous about means, so bustling and ostentatious and full of self, so wrapt about in solemn vanity, that he is ready to turn from them and their cause in contempt and disgust. There is so little of nature and sincerity—of ardour and sentiment of character—such a dulness of perception—such a want of that enthusiasm for all that is great and lovely and true (which, while it makes us forgetful of ourselves, brings with it our highest enjoyments) such an offensive show and talk of factitious sensibility—that the current of his feelings is checked—he turns away depressed and disappointed—becomes reserved and shut up in himself, and he, whose mind is all emotion, and

who loves with a depth of feeling that few souls have ever sounded, is pointed at, as he stands aloof from men, as a creature cold and motionless.

But if manner too often goes for character—hard learnt rules for native taste—fastidiousness for refinement—ostentation for dignity—cunning for wisdom—timidity for prudence—and nervous affections for tenderness of heart—if the order of nature be so much reversed, and semblance so often takes precedence of truth, yet it is not so in all things, nor wholly so in any. The cruel and ambitious have touches of pity and remorse, and good affections are mingled with our frailties. Amidst the press of selfish aims, generous ardour is seen lighting up, and in the tumultuous and heedless bustle of the world, we meet with considerate thought and quiet and deep affections. Patient endurance of sufferings, bold resistance of power, forgiveness of injuries, hard tried and faithful friendship, and self-sacrificing love, are seen in beautiful relief over the flat uniformity of life, or stand out in steady and bright grandeur in the midst of the dark deeds of men. And then again, the vices of our nature are sometimes

revealed with a violence of passion and a terrible intellectual energy which fasten on the imagination of a creative and high mind, while they call out opposing virtues to pass before it in visions of glory. For "there is a soul of goodness in things evil," and the crimes of men have brought forth deeds of heroism and sustaining faith, that have made our rapt fancies but gatherings from the world in which we live.

And there are beautiful souls too in the world to hold kindred with a man of a feeling and refined mind, and there are delicate and warm and simple affections that now and then meet him on his way, and enter silently into his heart like peculiar blessings. Here and there on the road go with him for a time some who call to mind the images of his soul,—a voice or a look is a remembrancer of past visions, and breaks out upon him like openings through the clouds. The distant beings of his imagination seem walking by his side, and the changing and unsubstantial creatures of the brain put on body and life. In such moments his fancies are turned to realities, and over the real the lights of his mind shift and play—his imagination

shines out warm upon it—it changes, and takes the freshness of fairy life.

When such an one turns away from men, and is left alone in silent communion with nature and his own thoughts, and there are no bonds on the movements of the feelings, and nothing on which he would shut his eyes, but God's own hand has made all before him as it is, he feels his spirit opening upon a new existence—becoming as broad as the sun and air—as various as the earth over which it spreads itself, and touched with that love which God has imaged in all he has formed. His senses take a quicker life—his whole frame becomes one refined and exquisite emotion, and the etherealized body is made as it were a spirit in bliss. His soul grows stronger and more active within him as he sees life intense and working throughout nature; and that which is passing away links itself with the eternal, when he finds new life beginning even with decay, and hastening to put forth in some other form of beauty, and become a sharer in some new delight. His spirit is ever awake with happy sensations, and cheerful and innocent and easy thoughts. Soul and body are blending into one—the senses and thoughts

mix in one delight—he sees a universe of order and beauty and joy and life, of which he becomes a part, and he finds himself carried along in the eternal going on of nature. Sudden and short lived passions of men take no hold upon him, for he has sat in holy thought by the roar and hurry of the stream which has rushed on from the beginning of things; and he is quiet in the tumult of the multitude, for he has watched the tracery of leaves playing safely over the foam.

The innocent face of nature gives him an open and fair mind—pain and death seem passing away, for all about him is cheerful and in its spring. His virtues are not taught him as lessons, but are shed upon him and enter into him like the light and warmth of the sun. Amidst all the variety of the earth, he sees a fitness which frees him from the formalities of rule and lets him abroad to find a pleasure in all things, and order becomes a simple feeling of the soul.

Religion to such an one has thoughts and visions and sensations, tinged as it were with a holier and brighter light than falls on other men. The love and reverence of the Creator make their abode in his imagination, and he gathers

about them the earth and air and ideal worlds. His heart is made glad with the perfectness in the works of God, when he considers that even of the multitude of things that are growing up and decaying, and of those which have come and gone, on which the eye of man has never rested, each was as fair and complete as if made to live forever for our instruction and delight.

Freedom and order and beauty and grandeur are in accordance in his mind, and give largeness and height to his thoughts—he moves amongst the bright clouds, he wanders away into the measureless depths of the stars, and is touched by the fire with which God has lighted them—all that is made partakes of the eternal, and religion becomes a perpetual pleasure.

LETTER FROM TOWN. N^o. 2.

"Not moved a whit,
Constant to lightness still!"

"You're for mirth
Or I mistake you much."
The Old Law.

E'en such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so wo-begone."
Henry IV.

IN the first letter which I wrote you from town, I mentioned our old friend's taking me with him to his club. As we entered late, and a good part of the members could be seen but dimly through the smoke, I shall put off a general description till I have a view of them in a clear atmosphere. Besides, while it is fresh in my mind I wish to give you the latter part of a brisk dialogue, which was going on as we entered, between a snug built, well dressed, fresh looking man of about five and forty, and another of nearly the same age, I am told, but

apparently ten years older—of a slender, spare frame, clad in a mixed gray suit with black buttons—of a thin visage—with an impatient hurry at times in his speech, followed by a whining drawl. He nestled about in his seat, with a fidgeting motion, and there was a nervous twitching of the eyelids, and a restlessness in the eye, though he was all the while looking at one object, very much as folks do when repeating from memory. The first gentleman, who seemed to have most of the talk to himself, was going on thus, as we drew near them—

“There is no telling how large a pack of troubles a man may have upon his shoulders at the end of life, who keeps it always open like an alms-basket, and has no hole at bottom to let out a little of what he takes in. He need not ape a lame leg or a broken back. If he keeps his wallet stuffed with odd scraps of bad meat and mouldy bread, when he can get better, for the sake of groaning over his hard fare, he will go doubled and limping to his grave, in good earnest.”

“A pleasant fellow, you, Tom, with a nose-gay in your button-hole, and snuff between thumb and finger, who never found it too cold

without doors, nor too hot within. You go as gay as an ostrich, and with not a whit more thought neither."

"I've done my part, Abraham, and 'tis my wife's to look at things at home and to keep the children out of the fire, or cure 'em when they get in. Besides, I never saw any good come of too much care of the brats,—it only makes 'em helpless. And if all's at 'sixes and sevens at home, and my mate's voice and face grows sharp and angry, I come and take heart at the sound and sight of your clear voice and gay countenance, over a bottle of the best."

Abraham did not much like this taunt at his complainings, and his cheek began to kindle and grow redder and redder, like a coal fire, the louder and longer Tom laughed. Tom seemed to care little for this, so it put a stop to the drone-pipe which Abraham was said to play upon whenever he came to the club to have a merry night on't.

"No surer cure for our troubles, Abraham," says he, "than to get into a devil of a passion; and you've not a better friend in the world than I, who am always helping you into one. Why, you would have gone all night like an ill greased

wheel, spoke crawling after spoke to the melancholy creaking, hadn't I vexed you. Now, we shall see you in a fine whirl presently, striking fire out of every stone you hit against. Don't you remember how sad you were a half score years ago, because the gout wouldn't carry off your uncle ; and when it did that business for you, and took you softly by the toe, only to tell you of it, how wo-begone you looked, just as if your mourning suit was to be handed over to your man John to appear respectably in at his master's funeral? Yet you got here to-night without halting ; and if you don't make your way home as quick as the rest of us, it will not be the gout that will hinder you."

Abraham had three charges to answer to—his complaining disposition—his eagerness for his uncle's death, and an over fondness for good wine. Now, whether it was his anger that made him take up the last word, as is generally the way with a man in a passion, or that the two first charges were not to be denied, Abraham chose to clear himself of the last, and to have his revenge on Tom by railing against a weakness which he himself was kept from by at least as great failings. He knew the cost of his

liquor, and that too much wine helped to rid him of his uncle, and Abraham was said to be both a miser and a coward.

“Have you no shame in you, Tom, that you will be talking of drinking? Don’t you remember the snake track you made back the very last night you were here? And by the going of your clapper and the shine of your eye, you bid fair now to get home again the same way. When have you seen me make such a beast of myself as to hold up by my neighbour’s knocker instead of my own? I set my children a better example, teach them to strive against temptation and keep a watch upon any besetting sin. I tell them that life is a state of trial and affliction—that if they have riches and blessings to-day, they may be all gone to-morrow—that though they are now in health, sickness is nigh at hand, and that death may overtake them at noonday—that they must learn temperance in all things, and never forget they are in the midst of evils. But what good will it do to tell you this? You never will have forethought; and though there is little else but pains and misfortunes in life, you go on as reckless of all, as if harm could never come to you.”

“There you are at your saws again! I tell you what, father Abraham, he’s a fool who is always busy making troubles for himself, when there is no danger but what he will have enough gratis. I’ve weathered more storms than will ever beat on your head, though I haven’t sat like an old crow foreboding them while the sun shines. To take you in your own way, I have not forgotten what I read when a boy, ‘sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’ My creed is, ‘to enjoy is to obey.’ And I can say more than can be said for most of you, I make my faith the rule of my conduct, and take care to act up to it. And if I sometimes love my friends so much as to forget myself and be a little too merry with them, it stirs my blood, and I’m all the better for it the next day. I lose no time by it, for it is all done up at night; and if I’m not quite right, my children will have a warning in me at home, and not be obliged to pull their neighbours’ characters to pieces to mend their own with. Besides, it is as well to have a failing or two to keep the world in good humour with one, for nothing puts people out more than a man’s being too good for them. And what would come of all my virtues, if they only made men enemies to me and, so, to themselves?

You talk about my children. Why man, don't they owe their lives to me, and what's more, don't I teach them how to enjoy life. Would you have me pray over them all day, till they were as long visaged as saints at conventicle? Stout hearted, full blooded lads,—and you would have them crawling along as meek and pale as a Philadelphia patient after a semi-weekly slop bleeding! Then again—there's my wife—but one purse between us and no questions asked. Rides or walks as she pleases—and not a word about shoe leather.” Here Abraham coloured. “I'm all attention ;—see her at parties abroad, dine with her at home—when-ever there's company. She orders what suits her, and is undisputed mistress of the household. I'm always pleased to see her in spirits ; and if affairs go wrong, and she's in ill humour, I take care not to put any restraint upon her by being in the way. I was here an hour earlier than usual to-night because the servant let fall the tea-tray and broke half a dozen tea-cups,—and as I've missed my tea, thank you Mr. B. to fill my glass.”

Twirling a light silver headed cane in his right hand and reaching out his glass with his

left, I began filling it. At this critical moment the long, dry, wrinkled, sallow visage of Abraham, looking like the inside of an old cast-off snuff bladder, caught my eye. Turned partly round, and leaning forward,—contrary to his custom, for he seldom looked at the person he was talking with,—his eyes were fixed steadfastly upon the rattle-headed Tom, with that mixed expression of pity and imploring with which one gazes upon a man that is going to be hanged;—if Tom was just then to have been swung off, it could not have been more mournful. I was so intent upon the face of Abraham, that I forgot what I was about, till Tom, feeling the wine running over his hand, and moving suddenly, brought me to myself. Before I could mutter an apology he saw the direction of my eye, and turning towards Abraham burst out into a loud laugh. It was not to be withstood. Tom had broken the enchantment; and in spite of good breeding and good feeling, there was an instant roar of laughter through the room. This was too much even for Abraham. He sprang upon his feet, uttering something between a mutter and a curse, (he never dared swear outright) and twitching down his hat, which had

grown nap-worn and round edged through use, and at the same time seizing his long, slender oak cane with something like a threatening motion, he darted out of the room between a run and a stamp.

As soon as we could speak, and had wiped our eyes—"I told him a little while ago," said Tom, "that I was the best friend he had in the world, and I shall always prove so. By putting him into such a rage, he's off without paying his share of the reckoning. There need be no making up between us, for he will no sooner remember this, than he will forgive me from the bottom of his heart. Poor fellow, I pity him. Nobody ever set out with fairer prospects, or has had things more comfortable about him; and yet he is the most forlorn being living. Didn't you hear him prose just now about his anxiety for his children?—while all his aim is to see that they shall be no happier than himself; for he takes another's enjoyment as a reproach upon his own self-made misery. And as to his care about their worldly estate, it is all because he feels their possessions will be in a sort his even after death. For my part, when I die, I'm content to give up all my claims to those I leave behind

me. And while I live, I mean to make them and myself as merry as we can know how to be."

With a rap upon his box, and shaking the snuff from between his fingers, Tom ended his moral lecture; and with a well satisfied nod of the head, took himself off to wind up the night with a hand at whist.

The rest of the company soon went out, one after another, without any noise, like sparks upon burnt paper, leaving my old friend and me to finish the bottle. Without thinking of it, we at the same moment drew up to within a companionable distance of each other; and while carefully pouring a little, first into my glass and then into his, alternately, that we might share alike, till the bottle was drained; he began, in that same composed manner and low toned voice which was familiar to me some years ago, by observing, that though Tom's last remarks might seem harsh and in the extreme to me, yet he feared there was too much truth in them.

"I knew Abraham," said he, "when a child. He was then a spare lad, with a wrinkled brow, and weak, anxious voice. As he was feeble, his mother nursed him up with caudles and a tippet—bid him never wet his feet, and taught

him that it was a sin to dirty his clothes. Thinking him not fit to push his way in the world, and knowing that wealth stands one well in hand who has little force of character or intellect, Abraham was instructed, like other careful boys, to get himself a box to drop his money in, and never to spend his change foolishly on holydays. His love for every thing great and generous was destroyed by his attention's being forever taken up with little things. Seeing another so much concerned about him, made him overrate his own importance ; and his continued anxiety about his money and health soon centred all his thoughts and affections upon himself. And with all his pains-taking, finding others happier than himself, it was not long before he became an ill-natured, discontented man.

“ The other never had the headach in his life ; and fair weather or foul, it mattered little with him. Constitutionally happy, all that he could, he turned to enjoyment, and what he could not, he let alone. So much of his happiness came from his health, that he never cared for the more abstract pleasures of the mind ; and with that triumphant, joyous feeling which flows from full blood, he looked down upon feebler constitutions,

and at last felt a contempt for those who suffered under the afflictions of life. From the same cause, he apparently likes those who are fond of merriment, as well as he; and really supposes himself to be a kind-hearted, friendly fellow, when in truth he cares nothing about others only just so far as they help to make up a part of his pleasures. Tom is as selfish as Abraham, but not so annoying, because good natured. You may think I should allow some praise to this quality of character. There is no need of it. Men will always give it its full due; and as for its opposite, if it does not make its own punishment, the world will lay it on without sparing."

Here, our wine was gone, and the last candle was burning in the socket. We took our hats, and laying our reckoning on the table, we walked quietly home to my friend's house.

According to the little progress I have as yet made in my account of what I meet with in the city, you will be in danger of having me a correspondent for life.

Yours,

B.

WINTER SCENES.

The time has been that these wild solitudes—
Yet beautiful as wild—were trod by me
Oftener than now ; and when the ills of life
Had chafed my spirit—when the unsteady pulse
Beat with strange flutterings—I would wander forth,
And seek the woods. The sunshine on my path
Was to me as a friend. The swelling hills,
The quiet dells, retiring far between,
With gentle invitation to explore
Their windings, were a calm society
That talked with me and soothed me. Then the chant
Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress
Of the fresh sylvan air made me forget
The thoughts that broke my peace, and I began
To gather simples by the fountain's brink,
And lose myself in day-dreams. While I stood
In Nature's loneliness, I was with one
With whom I early grew familiar, one
Who never had a frown for me, whose voice
Never rebuked me for the hours I stole
From cares I loved not, but of which the world
Deems highest, to converse with her. When shrieked
The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,
And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades,
That met above the merry rivulet,
Were spoiled—I sought, I loved them still,—they seemed
Like old companions in adversity.
Still there was beauty in my walks ; the brook,

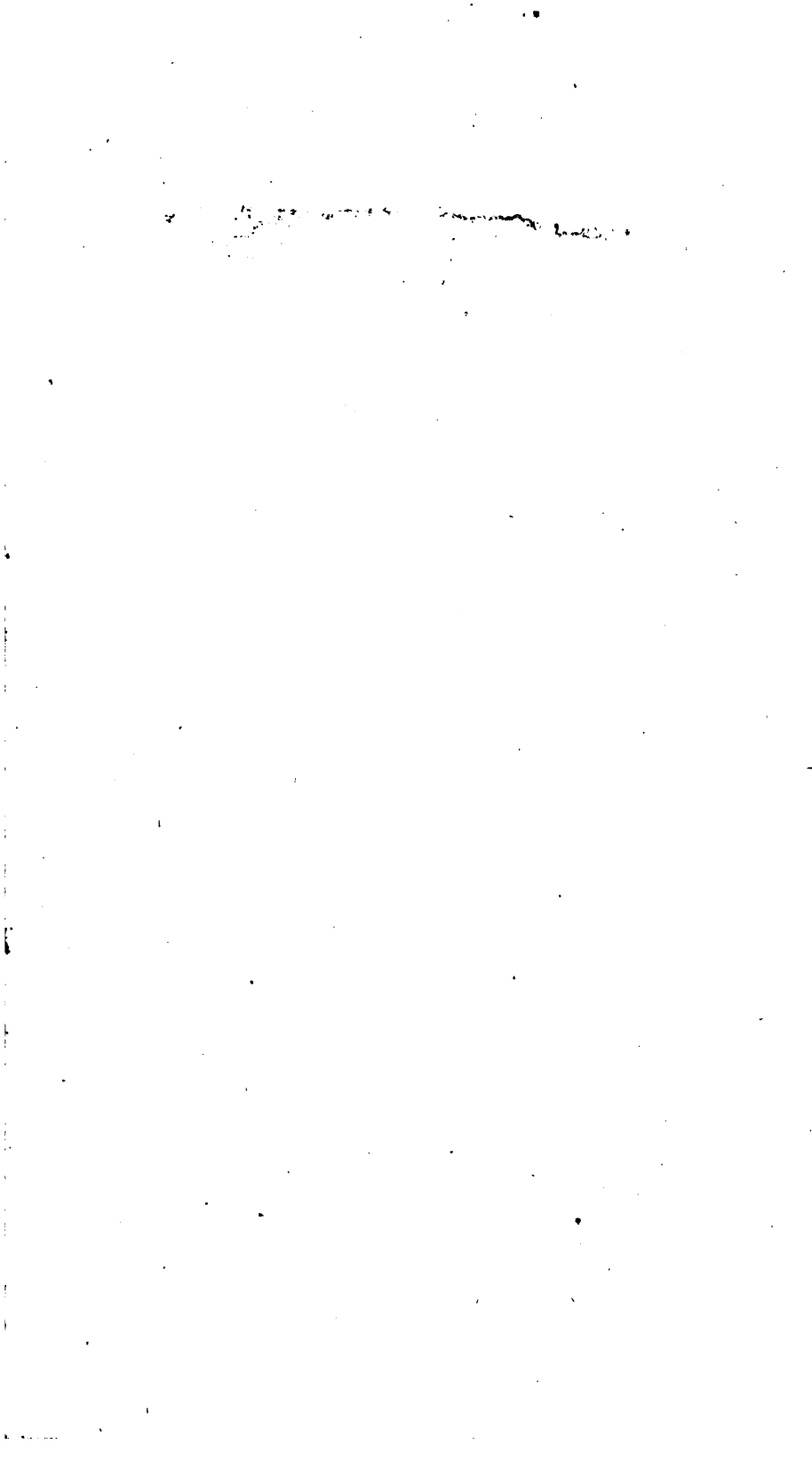
Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as gay
 As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar
 The village with its spires, the path of streams,
 And dim receding valleys, hid before
 By interposing trees, lay visible
 Through the bare grove, and my familiar haunts
 Seemed new to me. Nor was I slow to come
 Among them, when the clouds from their still skirts
 Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,
 And all was white. The pure keen air abroad,
 Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard
 Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee,
 Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept
 Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds
 That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,
 Patient, and waiting the soft breath of Spring,
 Feared not the piercing spirit of the North.
 The snow-bird twittered on the beechen bough;
 And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches bent
 Beneath its bright cold burden, and kept dry
 A circle on the earth of withered leaves,
 The partridge found a shelter. Through the snow,
 The rabbit sprang away. The lighter track
 Of fox, and the rackoon's broad path were there,
 Crossing each other. From his hollow tree
 The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts
 Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway
 Of winter blast to shake them from their hold.

But Winter has yet brighter scenes,—he boasts
 Splendours beyond what gorgeous Summer knows,
 Or Autumn with his many fruits and woods
 All flushed with many hues. Come, when the rains

Have glazed the snow and clothed the trees with ice,
 When the slant sun of February pours
 Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach !
 The encrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,
 And the broad arching portals of the grove
 Welcome thy entering. Look, the massy trunks
 Are cased in the pure crystal, branch and twig
 Shine in the lucid covering, each light rod,
 Nodding and tinkling in the stirring breeze,
 Is studded with its trembling water-drops,
 Still streaming as they move with coloured light.
 But round the parent stem the long low boughs
 Bend in a glittering ring, and arbours hide
 The glassy floor. Oh ! you might deem the spot
 The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,
 Deep in the womb of earth, where the gems grow,
 And diamonds put forth radiant rods, and bud
 With amethyst and topaz, and the place
 Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam
 That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall
 Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night,
 And fades not in the glory of the sun ;
 Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts
 And crossing arches, and fantastic aisles
 Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost
 Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eye,—
 Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault ;
 There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud
 Look in. Again the wildered fancy dreams
 Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,
 And fixed with all their branching jets in air,
 And all their sluices sealed. All, all is light,

Light without shade. But all shall pass away
 With the next sun. From numberless vast trunks,
 Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound
 Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve
 Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont.

And it is pleasant when the noisy streams
 Are just set free, and milder suns melt off
 The plashy snow, save only the firm drift
 In the deep glen or the close shade of pines,—
 'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke
 Roll up among the maples of the hill,
 Where the shrill call of youthful voices wakes
 The shriller echo, as the clear pure lymph,
 That from the wounded trees, in twinkling drops,
 Falls in the dazzling brightness of the morn,
 Is gathered in with brimming pails ; and oft,
 Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of axe
 Makes the woods ring. Along the quiet air
 Come and float calmly off the light soft clouds,
 Such as you see in summer, and the winds
 Scarce stir the branches. Lodged in sunny cleft,
 Where the cold breezes come not, blooms alone
 The little wind-flower, whose just-opened eye
 Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at—
 Startling the loiterer in the naked groves
 With unexpected beauty, for the time
 Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar.
 And ere it comes, the encountering winds shall oft
 Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds
 Shade heaven, and bounding on the frozen earth,
 Shall fall their volleyed stores, rounded like hail
 And white like snow, and the loud North again
 Shall buffet the vexed forests in his rage.



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